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THE

THEORY

OF

LANGUAGE.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I. Of the Origin and General Nature of Speech.
PART II. Of Universal Grammar.

BY

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Ex elementis conſtant, ex principiis oriuntur, omnia: Et ex judicii conſuetudine in rebus MINUTIS adhibita pendet ſæpiſſime in maximis vera atque accurata ſcientia. S. CLARKE. Pref. ad Homer.

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THIS Treatiſe was printed ſome time ago in a Collection of Eſſays by the ſame hand. It is now publiſhed ſeparate, by the advice of ſeveral men of learning, who have been pleaſed to approve of it; and to ſay, that it may be particularly uſeful in Schools, and to thoſe Young Perſons, who, in their courſe of ſtudy, may be making a tranſition from the more obvious to the abſtruſer parts of knowledge;—from the elements of Grammar, Hiſtory, and Phyſicks, to the firſt principles of Logick and Moral Philoſophy. In this laſt reſpect, the author has, from repeated experience, and long before he thought of making it publick, found it to have a beneficial tendency.

A Philoſophical Examination of the principles of Grammar is a profitable exerciſe to the mental powers of Young People; and promotes, more perhaps than any other ſtudy within their ſphere, clearneſs of ap-

 prehenſion,

prehenſion, and correctneſs of language. Nor are the ſubtleties, inſeparable from this part of ſcience, hard to be underſtood, even in early life, when explained in a ſimple and familiar ſtyle, and with a due regard to the gradual expanſion of the human intellect.

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ERRATA.

Page 7. line 19. read—He lived and died
110. line 11. read—characters imply
171. line 3. read—*vehementer*
180. line 1. read—idiom.
293. line ult. read—Il ſerpente
341. line 12. read—has never been
355. line 21. read—dependencies,
357. line 30. read—regular

The Theory of Language.

PART I.

Of the Origin and General Nature of Speech.

CHAP. I.

Man, the only Animal capable of Speech.— Speech, an Art, acquired by Imitation.— Natural Signs of human Thought.— Artificial Signs of Thought:— firſt, Viſible;— ſecondly, Audible.

THE faculties of the human mind have long ago been divided into thoſe of Perception and thoſe of Volition; the former being ſuppoſed to be the inlets to knowlege; the latter, the inſtruments of action. But, in many caſes, we cannot perceive without an exertion of the will; nor act, without adding to our ſtock of knowlege: and therefore, the diviſion, though ſufficiently accurate perhaps, is not perfectly ſo. The faculty of Speech is Active, becauſe we act, while we make uſe of it; and may alſo be called Perceptive, becauſe by means of it we perceive what paſſes in the minds of one another.

But whether we call it Active, or Perceptive, or to what claſs of human powers we refer it, is a matter of no conſequence. It is one of the diſtinguiſhing characters of our nature; none of the inferiour animals being in any degree poſſeſſed of it.

For we muſt not call by the name of *Speech* that imitation of human articulate voice, which parrots and ſome other birds are capable of; Speech implying thought, and conſciouſneſs, and the power of ſeparating and arranging our ideas, which are faculties peculiar to rational minds. In Greek, the ſame word *Logos* denotes both Speech and Reaſon: a proof, that the Greeks conſidered Reaſon and Speech as very nearly allied.

That ſome inferiour animals ſhould be able to mimick human articulation, will not ſeem wonderful, when we recollect, that even by machines certain words have been articulated. But that the parrot ſhould annex thought to the word he utters, is as unlikely, as that a machine ſhould do ſo. *Rogue* and *knave* are in every parrot's mouth: but the ideas they ſtand for are incomprehenſible, except by beings endued with reaſon and a moral faculty.

It has however been a common opinion, and is probable enough, that there may be, among irrational animals, ſomething, which

by

by a *figure* we may call *Language*, even as the inſtinctive economy of bees is figuratively called *Government*. This at leaſt is certain, that the natural voices of one animal are in ſome degree intelligible, or convey particular feelings, or impulſes, to others of the ſame ſpecies. The ſummons of the hen is underſtood by the chickens: and a ſimilar mode of communication may be obſerved, in many of the irrational tribes, between the parents and offſpring, and between one animal and his cuſtomary aſſociate. Nay, to dogs and horſes, and even to other creatures of leſs ſagacity, the voice of their maſter ſoon becomes familiar; and they learn to perform certain actions, on receiving certain audible or viſible ſignals, from thoſe whom they are wont to obey. This, however, is a proof, rather of their docility, and of the quickneſs of their eye and ear, than of any *intelligence* in regard to language. And it is more to the preſent purpoſe to remark, that in one and the ſame brute animal different paſſions often expreſs themſelves by different voices. How unlike, for example, are the cries of the ſame dog, when he barks at the ſtranger, ſnarls at his enemy, whines with hunger or cold, howls with ſorrow when he loſes his maſter, or whimpers with joy when he finds him again!*

But

* Theſe, and ſome other varieties in the voice of this animal, are deſcribed by Lucretius with exquiſite propriety.

But theſe, and the like animal voices, have no analogy with human ſpeech.—For, firſt, men ſpeak by art and imitation, whereas the voices in queſtion are wholly inſtinctive: for that a dog, which had never heard another bark, would notwithſtanding bark himſelf, admits of no doubt; and that a man, who had never heard any language, would not ſpeak any, is equally certain.—Secondly, the voices of brute animals are not broken, or reſolvable, into diſtinct elementary ſounds, like thoſe of man when he ſpeaks, (who is, from this circumſtance, called by Homer and Heſiod *Merops* or *voice-dividing*); nor are they ſuſceptible of that variety, which would be neceſſary for the communication of a very few ſentiments: and it is pretty certain, that, previouſly to inſtruction, the young animals comprehend their meaning, as well as the old.—And, thirdly, theſe voices ſeem intended by nature to expreſs, not diſtinct ideas, but ſuch feelings only, as it may be for the good of the ſpecies, or for the ad-

Irritata canum cum primum magna moloſſûm
Mollia ricta fremunt duros nudantia dentes;
Longe alio ſonitu rabie diſtracta minantur,
Et cum jam latrant, et vocibus omnia complent.
At catulos blande cum lingua lambere tentant,
Aut ubi eos jactant pedibus, morſuque petentes,
Suſpenſis veros imitantur dentibus hauſtus,
Longe alio pacto gannitu vocis adulant;
Et cum deſerti baubantur in ædibus, aut cum
Plorantes fugiunt ſummiſſo corpore plagas.
V. 1062.

vantage

vantage of man, that they ſhould have the power of uttering: in which, as in all other reſpects, they are analogous, not to our ſpeaking, but to our weeping, laughing, groaning, ſcreaming, and other natural and audible expreſſions of paſſion.

In this light they are conſidered by Ariſtotle, in the following paſſage. "Man of "all animals is only poſſeſſed of ſpeech. "Bare ſound indeed may be the ſign of "what is pleaſurable or painful; and for "that reaſon is it common even to other "animals alſo. For ſo far we perceive even "their nature can go, that they have a ſenſe "of thoſe *feelings*, and *ſignify them* to each "other. But Speech is made to indicate "what is expedient, and what hurtful, and, "in conſequence of this, what is juſt, and "unjuſt. It is therefore given to men: "becauſe this, with reſpect to other ani-"mals, is to men alone peculiar, that of "Good and Evil, Juſt and Unjuſt, they "only poſſeſs a ſenſe or feeling *."

Some animals ſeem to employ their voice, without any purpoſe of giving information to others of the ſpecies. The lark ſings a great part of the day, even when alone. This affords a preſumption, that her ſong has nothing in it of the nature of ſpeech.

* Tranſlated by Mr. Harris. See *Treatiſe concerning Happineſs*, note fifteenth.

That energy ſeems natural to the animal when ſoaring in the ſky: perhaps it may be of benefit to her, as an amuſement: certainly it is very pleaſing to the ear of man.

Some birds ſing, while preparing their neſts, and taking care of their young, and are ſilent the reſt of the year. But it is not the nature of ſpeech to be periodical: whereas thoſe energies muſt be ſo, which are the effect of periodical feelings. Others of the brute creation are moſt apt to utter their voices, when the weather is about to change. But can we ſuppoſe, that they are then *thinking* of the weather, or that they *intend* to give information concerning it? Is it not more likely, that, as Virgil obſerves, their bodies being affected by alterations of the atmoſphere which we cannot perceive *, they are then, without any purpoſe, expreſſing inſtinctively certain pleaſant, or painful ſenſations; even as the infant of a month old does, while it is crying, or ſmiling?

We learn to ſpeak, by imitating others; and therefore he cannot ſpeak, who does not

* Haud equidem credo, quia ſit divinitus illis
Ingenium, aut rerum fato prudentia major:
Verum, ubi tempeſtas et cœli mobilis humor
Mutavere vias, et Jupiter humidus auſtris
Denſat erant quæ rara modo, et quæ denſa relaxat,
Vertuntur ſpecies animorum, et pectora motus
Nunc alios, alios dum nubila ventus agebat,
Concipiunt. Hinc ille avium concentus in agris,
Et lætæ pecudes, et ovantes gutture corvi.
Georgic. i. 415.

hear.

hear. It was once a vulgar notion, that a perſon brought up from infancy without hearing any language would of himſelf ſpeak Hebrew; this having been thought the firſt, the moſt ſacred, and the moſt natural dialect. But it is now acknowleged, and is even ſaid to have been proved by experiment, that ſuch a perſon would be dumb; or, at leaſt, would employ his voice in imitating the inarticulate ſounds he might have heard, or in expreſſing certain feelings by groans, laughter, cries, and the like modes of natural utterance.

I formerly knew a poor man, who ſpoke a very ſingular dialect. His name was William More; his age about ſixty. He was ſo deaf, that his neighbours doubted, whether he could be made to hear any ſound whatever. He had lived and died in the pariſh where he was born, was never thirty miles from home, and, ſo far as I know, never ſaw a foreigner. The language he uttered was intelligible to thoſe only, who had beſtowed ſome attention upon it; and he himſelf underſtood no other. It was made up, partly of Engliſh or Scotch words, moſt of them much altered, and partly of other words that were altogether his own. Of the former claſs, I remember, that his uſual affirmation was *trot*, probably corrupted from *troth*; *corn* was *tora*; *come* was *tum*; and inſtead of *ſoldier* he ſaid *ſholta*. Of the latter ſort may be reckoned, *odee*, ſignifying *good*; *blava*,

evil; *virrup*, a *duck*; *raad*, *vehemently*; *furrè*, to *cut*, or *kill*; *plode*, a *man*; *pitoot*, a *gentleman*. As he had little knowlege but what belonged to the buſineſs of a labourer, his ideas were few, and his language very defective; conſiſting chiefly of nouns, adjectives, and verbs, with ſome adverbs: his words had no inflection: and I think he uſed neither articles, nor conjunctions, and ſcarce any pronouns. He looked ſteadily in the face of thoſe who ſpoke to him, and ſeemed to gather the meaning, by ſight, from the motion of their lips.

Though I was then very young, I had great curioſity to know the hiſtory of his early years: but could never learn more than this; that there was nothing remarkable in it; and that his father, and mother, and all his relations and neighbours, ſpoke like other people.—It ſeems probable, that he had never heard very acutely, but did not become quite deaf till he was four or five years old: the conſequence of which would be, his retaining ſome words imperfectly, and forgetting many others. For, if he had from his birth been as deaf as when I knew him, he never could have ſpoken at all: if he had been under that age when he loſt his hearing, he could hardly have articulated the letter R ſo diſtinctly as he did: and if he had been much older, he would no doubt have remembered more of his mother tongue.

The

The peculiar formation of his own words it is impoſſible to account for, unleſs we were better informed in regard to his infancy and education. All his ſyllables were eaſily pronounced; he had little emphaſis, and no accent, nor any diphthongal ſounds: and his articulations were performed by the lips, the tongue, and the palate, being ſeldom naſal, and, I think, never guttural. He was a chearful, ſober, honeſt man; and ſpoke reverently of the Supreme Being, by a name, which, though I have not forgotten, I do not chuſe to ſet down. *—Theſe facts, though little can be inferred from them, are not unworthy of notice.

We ſpeak, in order to communicate our thoughts to one another; which our ſocial

* Biſhop Burnet gives a ſimilar inſtance of M. Godet's daughter of Geneva; who at the age of two years loſt her hearing, and never after could hear what was ſaid to her; though ſhe was not wholly inſenſible to great noiſes. By obſerving the motions of the mouth and lips of others, ſhe had acquired ſo many words, that out of theſe ſhe had formed a ſort of jargon, in which ſhe could hold converſation whole days with thoſe who could ſpeak her language. She knew nothing that was ſaid to her, unleſs ſhe ſaw the motion of their mouths who ſpoke; ſo that in the night they were obliged to light candles, when they wanted to ſpeak to her. She had a ſiſter, with whom ſhe had practiſed her language more than with any body elſe: and, what is ſtrange, though not unaccountable, by laying her hand, in the dark, on her lips and face, ſhe could perceive by their motion what was ſaid, and ſo could diſcourſe with her in the dark.

Burnet, Letter iv. page 248.

affections

affections incline us powerfully to do: and the practice of ſpeaking improves our natural faculty of ſeparating, arranging, and comparing our ideas. I call that faculty natural, and conſider it as the foundation of the art of ſpeech: for, without it, though ſome animals might be ſo taught, or a machine ſo conſtructed, as to articulate words, it would be impoſſible to ſpeak rationally, or with intelligence.

As what paſſes in my mind cannot itſelf appear to another man, it muſt be imparted (if at all imparted) by means of *ſigns*, or outward actions obvious to ſenſe. And they, as expreſſive of human thought, may be divided into Natural and Artificial.

The *Natural* Signs of thought are thoſe changes in the complexion, eyes, features, and attitude, and thoſe peculiar tones of the voice, which all men know to be ſignificant of certain paſſions and ſentiments. Thus Anger, Joy, Sorrow, Hope, Fear, Scorn, Contentment, Pity, Admiration, when under no reſtraint, appear in the voice, looks, and behaviour: and the appearance is every where underſtood, either by a natural inſtinct; or by our having learned experimentally, that a certain ſign accompanies, and indicates, a certain feeling, or idea. And that this kind of ſigns admits of conſiderable variety, is evident, not only from the pantomime, in which the whole progreſs

of

of a dramatick fable is repreſented in dumb ſhow, and by natural ſigns only; but alſo from the manifold expreſſions of human thought, which are exhibited to the eye by painters and ſtatuaries. Yet, when compared with the endleſs variety of our ideas, theſe natural ſigns will appear to be but few. And many thoughts there are, in the mind of every man, which produce no ſenſible alteration in the body.

Artificial Signs, or Language, have, therefore, been employed univerſally for the purpoſe of communicating thought; and are found ſo convenient, as to have ſuperſeded in a great meaſure, at leaſt in many nations, the uſe of the Natural. Yet, where language has been little improved, as among ſavages, and is of courſe defective in clearneſs and energy, it is for the moſt part enforced by looks, geſtures, and voices, naturally ſignificant: and even ſome polite nations, the French for example, from an inborn vivacity, or acquired reſtleſneſs, accompany their ſpeech with innumerable geſtures, in order to make it the more emphatical; while people of a graver turn, like the Engliſh and Spaniards, and who have words for all their ideas, truſt to language alone for a full declaration of their mind, and ſeldom have recourſe to geſture, unleſs when violence of paſſion throws them off their guard. However, as the natural ſigns *may*

give

give ſtrength and grace to the artificial, it is expected, even where the greateſt national gravity prevails, that, in his publick performances, the former ſhould, in ſuch a degree, be adopted by the orator, as to ſhow that he is in earneſt, and by the ſtage-player, as that he may the more effectually imitate nature.

For elocution is not perfect, unleſs the artificial ſigns of thought are enforced by the natural, or at leaſt by ſuch of them, as are neither troubleſome to the ſpeaker, nor offenſive to the hearer. Words of indignation pronounced with a ſoft voice and a ſmile, jokes accompanied with weeping, or lamentation with laughter, would be ridiculous: but, on the other hand, if a player, in reciting a melancholy ſtrain, were to burſt out into real tears, he would loſe that ſelf-command, without which nothing can be done with elegance. Actors will never expreſs naturally what they do not intenſely feel*: yet their feelings muſt not diveſt them of their preſence of mind, nor diſqualify them for any exertion that belongs to their part. And I remember, that, on aſking Garrick, how it was poſſible for one who felt as he did, to act with ſo much nature and grace, and with ſuch perfect ſelf-

* See Hor. Ar. Poet. ver. 99—111.—and an Eſſay on Poetry and Muſick as they affect the Mind. Part i. chap. 3.

command,

command, he told me, that I had touched upon the moſt eſſential, and what he had always found the moſt difficult, point of theatrical imitation.

In that oratory, which is addreſſed to the paſſions, and which in this country is little uſed, the natural ſigns of thought muſt enforce the artificial with as ſtrong an energy, as in the action of the theatre. But the publick ſpeaker, whoſe aim is to inſtruct and perſuade, gives ſcope to thoſe natural expreſſions only, that imply conviction, and earneſtneſs, with a mild and benevolent demeanour, and ſometimes a modeſt dignity becoming the cauſe of truth and virtue. And in polite converſation, no voices, looks, or attitudes are allowable, but ſuch as betoken kindneſs, attention, good-humour, and a deſire to pleaſe.

Des Cartes, and ſome other philoſophers, have endeavoured to explain the phyſical cauſe, which connects a human paſſion with its correſpondent natural ſign. They wanted to ſhow, from the principles of motion and of the animal economy, why Fear, for example, produces trembling and paleneſs; why Laughter attends the perception of incongruity; why Anger inflames the blood, contracts the brows, and diſtends the noſtrils; why Shame is accompanied with bluſhing; why Deſpair fixes the teeth together, diſtorts the joints, and disfigures the features; why

Scorn

Scorn ſhoots out the lip; why Sorrow overflows at the eyes; why Envy and Jealouſy look aſkance; and why Admiration raiſes the eyebrows, and opens the mouth. Such inquiries may give riſe to ingenious obſervation; but are not in other reſpects uſeful, becauſe never attended with ſucceſs. He who eſtabliſhed the union of ſoul and body knows how, and by what intermediate inſtruments, the one operates upon the other. But to man this is a myſtery unſearchable. We can only ſay, that tears accompany ſorrow, and the other natural ſigns their reſpective paſſions and ſentiments, becauſe ſuch is the will of our Creator, and the law of the human conſtitution.

The *Artificial* Signs of thought derive their meaning from human art and compact; and are not underſtood, except by thoſe who have been taught how to uſe them. Of theſe any man may invent a ſyſtem; and by their means converſe, with thoſe who are in the ſecret, ſo as that nobody elſe ſhall underſtand him.

They are divided into *Viſible* and *Audible*. For, though human thoughts may be communicated by touch, (as people of certain profeſſions are ſaid to know a brother, and to make themſelves known to him, by taking hold of his hand; and Mr. Sanderſon of Cambridge, who was born blind, ſtudied and taught geometry by diagrams cut in wood;)

yet

yet tangible ſigns of thought are not in common uſe, nor at all requiſite on ordinary occaſions.

Of *Viſible* Artificial Signs there may be many ſorts. Dumb men uſe them in converſation, and enforce them by a variety of natural ſigns. And where a dumb man is known to make his thumb (for example) a ſign of *good*, and his little finger of *evil*, his meaning is underſtood as well when he holds up or points to thoſe organs, as if he were to utter the words *good* or *evil*. And, after he is inſtructed in the nature of written language, it would be no difficult matter to teach him how to make and uſe an alphabet, by pointing to the ſeveral joints of his fingers, or to other parts of his body; which among his friends would be of great benefit to him, both in the way of amuſement, and as an inlet to knowlege. Dumb men of quick parts do generally expreſs a word, or an idea, by a ſingle ſign; which is a more expeditious method than the other, but not ſo accurate, or ſo comprehenſive.

This ſort of viſible alphabet, by which different parts of the hand repreſent different vowels and conſonants, is much uſed, as I am told, in nunneries and boarding-ſchools; and conveys, when one becomes expert in it, ſentiments as clearly, though not ſo quickly, as words could do.

At ſea, when ſhips ſail in company, viſible ſigns are not only uſeful, but neceſſary. A ſyſtem of theſe, for the uſe of the Britiſh navy, was invented by James II, about an hundred years ago; and is ſaid to be ſo convenient, that it has not to this day been materially improved. Every Britiſh ſeaman in the King's ſervice is trained up in the knowlege of them: and, to prevent miſtakes from forgetfulneſs, every commander in the navy receives from the Admiralty a book, wherein are explained the meaning of the ſeveral ſignals, and the method of conveying orders or intelligence from one ſhip to any other in the ſquadron. Theſe ſignals, many of which, that they may be the more ſignificant, are accompanied with the firing of guns, are made, by hanging out, from the ſeveral parts of the ſhip, lights in the night-time, and flags and ſtreamers of different colours by day. The fulleſt account of them, that I have ſeen, is in Chambers's Dictionary, under the word *Signal*.

The antients, particularly the Greeks, were remarkable for their ingenious contrivance of ſignals by fire. We are aſſured, that, in a mountainous country, they could in a moment, by means of torches, convey intelligence to a very great diſtance. They even invented a method of expreſſing, by the number and arrangement of flambeaus, every

letter of the alphabet; ſo that a guard on one eminence could converſe, by ſpelling their words, with another many leagues off. There is an exact deſcription of it in Polybius; and in the ſeventeenth book of the Antient Hiſtory by Rollin; who adds, that he had ſeen a pamphlet, printed in 1702, and dedicated to the King of France by Monſ. Marcel, which explained a ſyſtem of ſignals, whereby any piece of news could be communicated by one ſhip to another at a diſtance, as quickly as it could be ſet down in writing.

Fire-ſignals are of great antiquity. Clytemneſtra, at Argos, is ſaid to have received, in this way, intelligence of the deſtruction of Troy, the very night in which it was taken. A fire, kindled by Agamemnon's order on mount Ida, was ſeen at Lemnos, where another was inſtantly lighted, which was repeated on Athos, and ſo forwarded from one eminence to another, where guards had been placed on purpoſe, till at laſt it ſhone on the heights of Arachne, and was deſcried by a watchman ſtationed on the top of Clytemneſtra's palace. The progreſs of theſe ſignals is minutely deſcribed by Eſchylus, in the tragedy of Agamemnon; which opens with a ſoliloquy of the watchman, complaining, that for nine years he had paſſed the night in that place without ſleep, looking out for the promiſed ſignal. While

he is ſpeaking, he diſcovers it, and gives notice to the queen; who, in announcing the good news, informs the chorus, by what means it had been tranſmitted to her. The paſſage is curious; and proves at leaſt, that ſignals by fire were well known in Greece in the days of Eſchylus; who flouriſhed five hundred years before Chriſt. Quintus Curtius relates, that they were frequent among the Aſiatics in the time of Alexander: and we learn from Ceſar and Livy, that they were uſed by the Romans. Traces of them are ſtill to be ſeen on the tops of mountains in Spain. And in this kingdom there are ſeveral high hills, hollowed a little on the ſummit, which retain the marks of burning, and are by ſome believed to have been volcanoes; though I think it more probable, that they may have been ſtations, where fires were occaſionally lighted to alarm the country. Of theſe I remember three in the neighbourhood of Inverneſs, each viſible from the other, and about ten miles diſtant; and one in the county of Angus, not far from Aberlemno.

Any human action might be made the ſign of thought; but all are not equally convenient. Our ideas ariſe and ſhift with great quickneſs: and therefore thoſe actions or ſigns only can do them juſtice in the expreſſion, which are eaſily performed, and of great variety, and in each variety obvious to ſenſe. By means of an alphabet formed by pointing

to

to the joints of the fingers, and by other ſorts of geſticulation, many human ſentiments might no doubt be expreſſed; but viſible ſigns of this kind are of no uſe in the dark, and when diſtant are not perceptible; nor do they admit of ſufficient variety; nor are they ſo eaſy in the performance, as the neceſſities of life would often require. But Audible Signs are equally uſeful by night and by day, and may be underſtood at a conſiderable diſtance: and the ſounds of one and the ſame human voice may be varied without end, and are, in all their varieties, eaſily managed, and by the human ear diſtinctly perceptible. Indeed, when we compare the ear with the voice of man, we are at a loſs to determine, whether the one is the more admirable for its power of diverſifying ſounds, or the other for that of diſtinguiſhing them.—Audible Signs, therefore, conſtitute language in all nations. And if men could always be preſent with thoſe to whom they wiſh to give information, ſignals, and every other viſible ſign of thought, would be unneceſſary; and ſpeech, as it is the readieſt, would be the only, vehicle of human ſentiment.

CHAP. II.

Of the organs of Speech, and the nature and powers of the human Voice.—Of Articulation. Vowel and Conſonant Sounds,—their formation, and various claſſes. Thirty two or thirty three elementary ſounds in the Engliſh tongue.

NOTWITHSTANDING the endleſs variety of human articulate voices, their elementary ſounds are few and ſimple, at leaſt in all the languages I am acquainted with.—But before I proceed to the elements of Speech, it may be proper to premiſe ſome obſervations on the nature and powers of the human voice.

Human Voice is air ſent out from the lungs, and ſo agitated, or modified, in its paſſage through the windpipe and larynx, as to become diſtinctly audible. The windpipe, wezand, or rough artery, is that tube, which, on touching the forepart of our throat externally, we feel hard and uneven. It conveys air into the lungs for the purpoſe of reſpiration and ſpeech. It conſiſts of cartilages, circular before, that they may the better reſiſt external injury; but ſoft and flattiſh on the oppoſite ſide, that they may not hurt the gullet, or eſophagus; which lies cloſe behind, and is the tube whereby what we

we eat and drink is conveyed into the ſtomach. Theſe cartilages are ſeparated by fleſhy membranes; by means of which the windpipe may be ſhortened or lengthened a little, and, when neceſſary, incurvated, without inconvenience.

The top, or upper part, of the windpipe is called the Larynx; conſiſting of four or five cartilages, that may be expanded or brought together, by the agency of certain muſcles which operate all at the ſame time. In the middle of the larynx there is a ſmall aperture, called the Glottis, through which the breath and voice are conveyed, but which, when we ſwallow any thing, is covered by a lid called the Epiglottis: for if any part of our food or drink were to get into the windpipe by this paſſage, it would occaſion coughing, till it were thrown out again.

Galen, and many other philoſophers, affirm, that both the larynx and the windpipe co-operate in rendering the breath vocal. But later authors have determined, and I think on good grounds, that the human voice is produced by two ſemicircular membranes in the middle of the larynx, which form by their ſeparation the aperture that is termed the Glottis. The ſpace between them is not wider than one tenth of an inch; through which the breath tranſmitted from the lungs muſt needs paſs with conſiderable velocity. In its paſſage, it is ſuppoſed to

give a briſk vibratory motion to the membranous lips of the glottis, and ſo to form the ſound which we call *voice*: by an operation, ſimilar to that of the two lips of the reed of a hautboy, when one takes them in one's mouth, and blows into them.

It ſeems, however, neceſſary, in order to the production of voice, that, by an energy of our will, a certain degree of tenſeneſs ſhould be communicated to the larynx, or at leaſt to the two membranes abovementioned: for we find, that we *can* breathe very ſtrongly without vocal ſound; and when we ſpeak or ſing, we are ſenſible of a peculiar tenſion or hardneſs in the organs of the throat, which ſeem to be more lax when we only breathe or whiſper. When we are in great pain, theſe organs of themſelves become tenſe, and transform our breathing into groans; a circumſtance, that is often of uſe to us; by raiſing pity in others, or bringing them to our aid, when we are incapable of ſpeech. And then, to repreſs our groans, by keeping the vocal membranes lax, requires an energy, which we do not care to continue, becauſe it is fatiguing and painful. Hence we ſay, that groaning relieves us; and in fact it does ſo: at leaſt, it is then more eaſy to groan, than to breathe without groaning.

The voice, thus formed, is ſtrengthened and mellowed by a reverberation from the palate,

palate, and other hollow places in the inſide of the mouth and noſtrils: and as theſe are better or worſe ſhaped for this reverberation, the voice is ſaid to be more or leſs agreeable. And thus the vocal organs of man appear to be, as it were, a ſpecies of flute, or hautboy; whereof the membranous lips of the glottis are the mouth, or reed, and the inſide of the throat, palate and noſtrils, the body: the windpipe being nothing more than the tube or canal, which conveys the wind from the lungs to the aperture of this muſical inſtrument.

Take the reed of a hautboy, put it between your lips, and blow into it; and a diſtinct ſound is heard: preſs it a little with your lips, blowing as before, and the ſound becomes more acute or ſhrill: preſs it ſtill more, that is, bring the two ſides of the reed ſtill cloſer, and the ſound is ſtill more acute. From this example we may partly conceive, in what manner the human voice is varied, with reſpect to the acuteneſs or gravity of its tones. The glottis is found to be narrower in women and young perſons than in men; and hence mens voices are deeper, or graver, than thoſe of boys and women. And we can at pleaſure dilate or contract this aperture, and ſo faſhion the tones of our voice into every variety of the muſical ſcale. But all have not this faculty in the ſame degree. Some voices comprehend two, and,

by ſtraining, even three octaves. Others have hardly the command of one. Two octaves are no uncommon medium. Voices that go very deep can ſeldom riſe high; and thoſe which are of a ſhrill treble are unable to reach the low notes of the baſs. In other words; when the aperture of the glottis is naturally wide, it cannot be made very narrow; and when it is naturally narrow, it cannot be made very wide. At leaſt, this ſeems to be a general rule; but it is not without exceptions. And it is ſomewhat remarkable, that of thoſe voices which are moſt neceſſary in harmony, as trebles and baſſes, there is great abundance; while counter-tenor voices, whereof one is ſufficient in a numerous chorus, are not often met with. —As to the ſtrength, or weakneſs, of the voice; it depends, on the ſtrength or weakneſs of the lungs; on the greater or leſs force that is exerted in emitting the breath; and partly too, perhaps, on the ſhape and magnitude of thoſe cavities in the throat and mouth, by which the ſound is reverberated.

It is hardly poſſible for him, whoſe muſical ear is naturally bad, ever to acquire ſuch a command of the membranes that form the glottis, as to ſeparate the tones of the voice by their true muſical intervals: which to perſons of a nice ear is ſo eaſy, even in infancy, that they find it difficult to do otherwiſe. Yet a nice ear is not always accom-

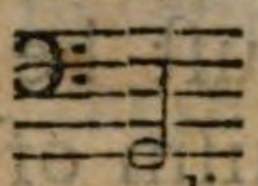
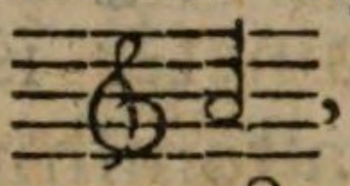
panied

panied with an exact voice. The voice, like every other faculty, may be improved by exercise, and grow worse by neglect: and there is, in the vocal organs of some people, a certain unpliableness, which no cultivation is able to overcome.

If we consider the many varieties of sound, which one and the same human voice is capable of uttering, together with the smallness of the diameter of the glottis; and reflect, that the same diameter must always produce the same tone, and, consequently, that to every change of tone a correspondent change of diameter is necessary; we must be filled with astonishment at the mechanism of these parts, and the fineness of the fibres that operate in producing effects so minute, so various, and in their proportions so exactly uniform. For it admits of proof, that the diameter of the human glottis is capable of at least sixty distinct degrees of contraction or enlargement, by each of which a different note is produced; and yet the greatest diameter of that aperture does not exceed one tenth of an inch. This, though certain in fact, is conceivable by those only, who can form an idea of that division, whereby an inch is parcelled out into six hundred parts. I speak not of extraordinary voices, whose powers may be incomparably greater; as indeed some authors have by calculation proved

that

that they are *. What is here affirmed will be found to hold true of any muſical voice of tolerable volubility and compaſs. And if ſo, we need not wonder, that the beſt ſingers ſhould often fail in the command of their voice. The fibres that miniſter to motions ſo exceedingly minute muſt themſelves be very delicate; and therefore liable to be affected by the ſtate of the air, and of the ſtomach, the general habit of the body, the

* That the variations of diameter here aſcribed to the human glottis are only the half of what it is capable of, may be evinced as follows. Suppoſe a man can ſing from *Gamut*  to *Alamire* of the treble  , which is no extraordinary compaſs, being only two octaves and one *great tone*. Let him take his fundamental note from the third ſtring of the violoncello, and ſing two octaves. Then let the inſtrument be tuned one *comma* (or the ninth part of a great tone) higher, and let him take his fundamental note, and ſing two octaves, as before: and ſo proceed, raiſing the tone of the inſtrument in the ſame proportion, and ſinging two octaves accordingly, till the ſound of the ſtring be nine commas, or one great tone, higher than it was at the firſt. In this way he ſings ſixteen octaves, every one of which is in every note different from the reſt. Now in ſixteen different octaves there are one hundred and twenty different tones, which are all ſounded by the voice of him who makes this experiment: in the courſe of which, the diameter of his glottis, though no more than one tenth of an inch, muſt have undergone one hundred and twenty diſtinct variations. So that, if an inch were divided into twelve hundred parts, the diviſions would not be more minute than thoſe variations are, which in the caſe ſuppoſed would affect the diameter of the human glottis.

emotions

emotions of the mind, and a thouſand other circumſtances.

When we ſing the notes of a tune without applying ſyllables, we uſe and vary our voice without articulation, and our vocal organs perform no other part than that of a wind inſtrument of muſick. Speech is made up of *articulate* voices: and what we call *Articulation* is performed, not by the lungs, wind-pipe, or larynx, but by the action of the throat, palate, teeth, tongue, lips, and noſtrils. Yet, in ſpeaking with *accent* *, the membranes of the glottis muſt be continually employed in contracting and dilating themſelves; becauſe, as will be obſerved hereafter, the voice is then continually riſing and falling in its tone: and, in ſpeaking with *emphaſis* *, the lungs are continually employed, not only in ſupplying that breath of which the voice is made, but alſo in emitting it ſometimes with more and ſometimes with leſs force; becauſe, as will appear by and by, the voice is then continually varying its energy in reſpect of ſtrength and ſoftneſs.—Speech is articulated voice: Whiſpering is articulated breath.

Articulation begins not, till the breath, or voice, has paſſed through the larynx. The ſimpleſt articulate voices are thoſe which proceed from an open mouth, and are by Grammarians called *Vocal* or *Vowel* ſounds.

* See the fourth and fifth chapters.

In

In tranſmitting theſe, the aperture of the mouth may be pretty large, or ſomewhat ſmaller, or very ſmall: which is one cauſe of the variety of vowels; a particular ſound being produced by each particular aperture. Moreover, in paſſing through an open mouth, the voice may be gently acted upon, by the lips; or by the tongue and palate; or by the tongue and throat: whence another ſource of variety in vowel ſounds.

Thus nine ſimple vowels may be formed; which Wallis, in his excellent Grammar, endeavours to prove are all heard in the Engliſh language, though we have not nine vowel letters to expreſs them. But Dr. Kenrick, in the preface to his Rhetorical Dictionary, ſhows, that the number of our ſimple vowel ſounds is eleven *. Perhaps the pronunciation of Engliſh may have changed a little ſince the time of Wallis, who flouriſhed an hundred and thirty years ago; and there may be vowel ſounds in it now, which were not in it then. This will not ſeem an

* Theſe eleven ſounds are, according to Kenrick, as follows. Numb. 1. Cur, Sir, Her, Monk, Blood.—2. Bull, Wolf, Puſh.—3. Pool, Troop.—4. Oft, Soft, George.—5. What, Was, War.—6. No, Foe, Beau.—7. Hard, Part, Laugh, Heart.—8. And, Hat, Bar.—9. Bay, They, Fail, Tale, Great, Dale, Vale.—10. Met, Sweat, Head, Bread, Realm, Ready.—11. Fit, Guilt, Engliſh.—But are not the vowels Number 2 and 3, the ſame in the ſound, and different only in the quantity; the former ſhort, and the latter long? If this be granted, our ſimple vowel ſounds are reduced to Ten.

extra-

extravagant ſuppoſition, when it is conſidered that Wallis gives the ſame ſound to the vowel in *lamb* and *dame*, which are now pronounced differently; makes the vowel ſound in *muſe* ſimple, which is now diphthongal; and informs us, that ſome old people in his time retained ſo much of Chaucer's pronunciation, as to ſay *houſè* and *horſè*, articulating in theſe and the like words the final *e* *, which is now invariably mute. In other tongues there may be ſimple vowel ſounds quite different from ours. Such is that of the French *u*; which is not heard in England, or in the North of Scotland; but in all the lowland provinces of North Britain, from the Grampian mountains to the Tweed, is ſtill in very frequent uſe.

When the voice, in its paſſage through the mouth, is totally intercepted, or ſtrongly compreſſed, there is formed a certain modification of articulate ſound, which, as expreſſed by a character in writing, is called a *Conſonant*. Silence is the effect of a total interception; and indiſtinct ſound, of a ſtrong compreſſion: and therefore a conſonant is not of itſelf a diſtinct articulate voice; and its influence in varying the tones of language is not clearly perceived, unleſs it be accompanied by an opening of the mouth, that is, by

* This is ſtill done by the vulgar in Scotland; but the words ſo pronounced are diminutives. Thus *houſè* is a ſmall houſe, *horſè* a little horſe. They alſo ſay, *Mannie*, *Gunnie*, *Staffie*, &c. meaning a little man, a little gun, a little ſtaff.

a vowel.—The conſonants that proceed from an *interception* of the voice, are called *Clauſæ* or *Cloſe* by Wallis; who very ingeniouſly divides them into claſſes, upon the following principle.

The human voice, in paſſing through the mouth, may be *intercepted*, by the lips, or by the tongue and palate, or by the tongue and throat: and each of theſe interceptions may happen, when the voice is directed to go out by the mouth only; or through the noſtrils only; or partly through the mouth, and partly through the noſe.

Thus, if the voice, directed to the mouth only, be totally intercepted by the lips, we articulate what is expreſſed by the letter P; if by the tongue and palate, T; if by the tongue and throat, K. Theſe three conſonants are properly called *mutes*; becauſe theſe interceptions, unleſs preceded or followed by a vowel, produce abſolute ſilence.

Again; if the voice, directed to go forth, partly through the mouth, and partly through the noſe, be totally intercepted by the lips, we form the ſound expreſſed by B; if by the tongue and palate, D; if by the tongue and throat, the ſimple ſound of G, as it is heard in the word *go*. This triad of conſonants are called *Semi-mutes*; becauſe without the aſſiſtance of any vowel they produce a faint ſound, which continues for a little time, and

ſeems

ſeems partly to paſs out by the noſe, and partly to reverberate from the roof of the mouth. And hence, when the noſe is ſhut, it is not eaſy for us to give them a diſtinct utterance.

Further; while the voice is paſſing out by the noſtrils chiefly, if the lips be cloſed, we hear the ſound of M; if the forepart of the tongue be applied to the palate, N is formed; and if the tongue be drawn a little backward towards the throat, we produce the final ſound of the words *ſing*, *ring*, *long*, &c. Theſe are called *Semi-vowels*; becauſe of themſelves, and without the aid of any vowel, they make a ſound which is not very indiſtinct, and may be continued as long as we pleaſe. If, while we are ſounding them, we ſuddenly ſhut our noſe, the ſound ceaſes entirely; which is a proof, that it goes out by the noſtrils. And if we attempt to articulate them, after having firſt ſhut our noſe, the ſounds produced will reſemble B, D, and G, more than M, N, and ING; a proof, that, in theſe two claſſes of conſonants, the mode of interception is almoſt, if not altogether, the ſame.

With the ſame diſpoſitions of the organs, and the ſame modes of emitting the breath, if the voice be not totally intercepted, but *ſtrongly compreſſed* in its paſſage, there is formed a ſecond order of conſonants, called by Wallis *Apertæ* or *Open*; and which are indeed

indeed the aſpirations of the mutes and ſemi-mutes. For the ſemi-vowels, if they could be aſpirated, would, in our author's opinion, become Groans or Lowings, rather than articulate voices. And yet perhaps in ſome languages they may be aſpirated, though they are not in ours.

Thus, if, in pronouncing P, or rather *ip*, we permit the breath to paſs out with ſome difficulty between our lips, we form that ſound of F which is heard in *off*. And, in the ſame manner, from B are formed V (or that ſound of F which is heard in *of*) when the aperture of the lips is ſmall and oblong; and W, when that aperture approaches to the circular form. So from T, if the breath is allowed to paſs between the tongue and the teeth, we derive that ſound of *th* which is heard in the word *think*: from which if the tongue is drawn a little backwards, and the breath paſſes with a kind of whiſtling ſound between it and the palate, we articulate S. And, by the ſame proceſs, we change D, firſt, into that ſound of *Th* which is heard in *Thine*; and ſecondly, into Z, or that ſound of the letter S, which is heard in *mans*, *laws*, *pleaſe*, &c.—Theſe two ſounds of *Th*, which are ſo common in our tongue, and give us no trouble, are of moſt difficult acquiſition to foreigners *: a proof, that ſimple and eaſy articulations

* "I have ſeen," ſays Sir David Dalrymple, "P. Weſ-
"ſeling, the editor of Diodorus Siculus, diſtort his face into
"convulſions,

articulations may be very laborious to thoſe, who have not been uſed to them in infancy: —adeo in teneris conſueſcere multum eſt.

In pronouncing S, if we draw the point of the tongue a little backwards, we change the conſonant into the final ſound of the word *bluſh*; which, though we mark it in writing by two letters *Sh*, is as ſimple a ſound as that of S.—In the ſame manner; namely, by drawing the point of the tongue a little backwards while we articulate Z, we form the ſimple ſound of the French J; which, according to the analogy of our alphabet, would be expreſſed by the letters Zh. This ſound in its ſimple form is heard in *viſion*, *Aſia*, *deriſion*, *evaſion*, &c.: and makes the laſt part of the complex ſound of the ſoft G, as it is heard in *gem*; which complex ſound, if I miſtake not, might be reſolved into *dzh*.

The liquids L and R are acknowledged by Wallis to be anomalous. He is inclined to derive them from D and N. He mentions a tribe of American Indians adjoining to New England, who cannot articulate R or L; but, when they attempt either, fall into N, and inſtead of *lobſter* ſay *nobſten* *: and we know, that R is one of the laſt letters

" convulſions, while attempting to expreſs the juſt ſound " of a Greek *Theta*." Annals of Scotland, vol. i. p. 5.

* I have met with two perſons, natives of Scotland, who did the ſame.

which European infants learn to pronounce, and that they are apt to uſe L in its ſtead. From all which we may gather, that the liquids N, L, and R, bear a cloſe affinity one with another.

If, while we articulate K, we let our breath paſs with a pretty ſtrong compreſſion between the middle of the tongue and throat, there is formed that guttural ſound, which in Scotland (where it is very common) is ſuppoſed to expreſs the Greek X, and in the vulgar dialect of that country is annexed to the letters *gh* in the words *might*, *light*, *bright*, *ſigh*, &c. In the ſame manner, by permitting the ſimple ſound of G, as it is heard in *go*, to eſcape from between the tongue and throat, in the form of an aſpiration, we pronounce another guttural, not unlike the former, which in Scotland makes the final ſound of the word *lough* or *loch*, which ſignifies a lake. Theſe two gutturals were certainly heard in the Anglo-Saxon (or one of them at leaſt), but have been long diſuſed in South Britain; and an Engliſhman finds it difficult to pronounce them; though to Scotchmen, who are inured to them from infancy, nothing is more eaſy *.

The

* On ſecond thoughts, I am in doubt, whether this account of the formation of theſe two gutturals be ſtrictly accurate. To thoſe readers, who know them and can pronounce them, it is ſubmitted, whether they may not be better

The ſound of the conſonant Y (as in *year*, *yes*, &c.) is alſo conſidered by Wallis as an aſpiration of the ſimple G, formed by a large and ſudden aperture of the organs; but I am not entirely ſatisfied that this is the caſe.—In ſome other reſpects, his ſyſtem may perhaps be exceptionable: but, as it is ingenious and ſimple, and in many particulars true, I thought a brief account of it, interſperſed with additional remarks, would give an idea of the manner in which the articulations of language are formed.

And now, we may aſcertain the exact number of ſimple elementary ſounds, which are heard in the language of England. Suppoſing H to mark, not an articulate voice,

better explained thus. The letter C, as a ſubſtitute for K, ſeems in Engliſh to have two ſounds, ſimilar indeed, but not the ſame; the one is heard in *came*, and the other in *come*. In pronouncing the firſt, the point of the tongue is directed towards the teeth of the lower jaw; and, to produce the other, the tongue is drawn back a little towards the throat. From the ſound of C in *came* the firſt mentioned guttural ſeems to be derived by aſpiration, and the other guttural from the ſound of the ſame letter in the word *come*. In provinces, where theſe gutturals are not uſed or known, I am afraid this account will hardly be intelligible: but a North Briton may underſtand it, provided he can articulate the word *came* in the Engliſh manner. And this he will do, if he give to the vowel *a* in *came* the ſame ſound which it bears in the words *name*, *tame*, *face*, *blame*, &c.—The letter K, like its ſubſtitute C, marks two diſtinguiſhable articulations of the ſame nature; the one in the words *key*, *king*, *keen*, *ſilk*, *milk*, &c. the other in *ſkull*, *hock*, *cork*, *ſtroke*, *yoke*, &c.

but only a breathing, (which is allowed by moſt grammarians to be its character) there will be found in the Engliſh tongue the following ſimple *conſonant* ſounds. 1. B, as in *ebb*. 2. D, as in *deed*. 3. F, as in *off*. 4. V, as in *of*, *love*, *velvet*. 5. G, as in *egg*. 6. K, as in *cook*. 7. L, as in *bell*. 8. M, as in *gem*. 9. N, as in *nun*. 10. P, as in *pope*. 11. R, as in *err*. 12. S, as in *aſs*. 13. Z, as in *zeal*, *laws*, *as*. 14. T, as in *it*. 15. W, as in *war*, *twang*. 16. Y, as in *you*, *yes*, *year*. 17. ING, as in *king*. 18. SH, as in *aſh*. 19. TH, as in *thumb*. 20. TH, as in *then*, *though*, *this*. 21. ZH, as in the French pronoun *je*; as in *viſion*, *deriſion*, &c; and as in the final ſound of the complex conſonant G, which is heard in the words *age*, *gem*, *George*, and which, as obſerved already, may be reſolved into *dzh*.

Of our other conſonants, C is ſuperfluous in both ſounds, the one being expreſſed by K, and the other by S; G, in the ſoft pronunciation, is not a ſimple, but a complex ſound; J is unneceſſary, becauſe its ſound, and that of the ſoft G, are in our language the ſame; Q, with its attendant U, is either complex, and reſolvable into Kw, as in *quality*, or unneceſſary, becauſe its ſound is the ſame with K, as in *opaque*; X is compounded of gs, as in *exact*, *example*, or of ks, as in *exerciſe*, *Alexander*; PH is ſuperfluous, becauſe F gives the ſame ſound; and CH is either

either compounded of *tſh* as in *church*, or ſimple, in which caſe it is ſuperfluous, being the ſame with K, as in *choler*, *chyle*, *archangel*, *character*, *ſtomach*.

Some think, that our *Y* and *W* are always vowel ſounds, and that the one might be expreſſed by *I*, and the other by *U*. If this be admitted, the number of our ſimple conſonants is reduced to nineteen. But this I think is a miſtake.—It is true, that *I* is ſometimes pronounced like the conſonant Y, as in the laſt ſyllable of *onion*, *opinion*, *William*; and Y like I, as at the end of a word, and when it follows a conſonant, as in *liberty*, *my*, *thy*, *chyle*. It is alſo true, that in *perſuade*, *ſuavity*, and ſome other words, the u has the exact ſound of the w; and that, in the end of ſome diphthongal ſyllables, the conſonant w is put improperly for the vowel u, as in *flew*, *view*, &c.—But, on the other hand, when we articulate the conſonant y, as in *yoke*, we begin, not with a vowel ſound reſembling *i* or *e*, but with a ſpringy ſeparation of the tongue from the palate, which opens a paſſage to a compreſſed or intercepted voice, and is, in the judgment of Wallis, an aſpiration of the ſimple G. And, in pronouncing *wdr*, we begin, in like manner, not with an open mouth, or vowel ſound like *u* or *oo*, but with ſeparating, by a wide and circular aperture, thoſe organs which, if they had remained in cloſe contact, would

have articulated the conſonant B.—Beſides, in analyſing the ſound of *qu*, as above, though I ſaid, that it might be reſolved into *kw*, I could not have ſaid that it was reſolvable into *ku*; for this would have implied, that *quality* (for example) was to be pronounced, not *kwality*, which is its real ſound, but *kewality*.—To which may be added, that the Italians, who pronounce our vowel *u*, both when it is diphthongal, as in muſe, *piutoſto*, and when it is ſimple, as in pull, *rumore*, *uccello*, *udire*, cannot without difficulty learn to pronounce the Engliſh conſonant *w*; which is a proof, that the articulations are different.

It appears then, that in the Engliſh tongue there are twenty-one ſimple conſonant ſounds; and, according to Dr. Kenrick, there are eleven ſimple vowels. So that the elementary ſounds of our language are thirty two; or, reckoning H an articulation, thirty three.

In other languages however there may be many others. The French U was already taken notice of. He who articulates R in the throat, and with an aſpiration, utters a ſound never heard in England, but which is a Celtick or Erſe word, and in the highlands of Scotland denotes a *horſe*: and there they call a *calf* by a name, which I can neither deſcribe nor articulate, but which ſeems to begin with an aſpirated L. In the Scotch dialect there are two gutturals, CH, and

and GH, which are not in Engliſh; the Welch have many peculiar articulations: and if the language of the Hurons be, as is ſaid, wholly guttural, its elementary ſounds muſt be very unlike thoſe of the European tongues.

When I ſay, that the elementary ſounds of our language are thirty two, or thirty three, I mean, not that the enumeration is abſolutely exact, but that it is ſufficiently ſo for the purpoſe of ſhowing how the ſimple articulations of language *may* be varied; which is all that is intended in this place. I know there are other ſimple ſounds in Engliſh, ſome of which perhaps have never been taken notice of by any writer on the ſubject. The two ſounds of K and C were mentioned; and if one had time to examine this matter more minutely, one might no doubt diſcover other articulations that are really diſtinguiſhable, though commonly ſuppoſed to be the ſame.

CHAP. III.

The Alphabet imperfect, and Spelling irregular; but neither ought to be altered:—Pronunciation cannot be the ſtandard of Orthography.—Of teaching the Deaf to ſpeak.—Of Diphthongs, Syllables, Words.—Of long and ſhort words.

IN order to be perfect, the Engliſh alphabet ought, therefore, to conſiſt of about thirty three letters; namely, eleven vowels, and twenty two conſonants: for, H, whether the ſymbol of a voice, or of a breathing, cannot be diſpenſed with, becauſe in many words it affects the pronunciation. But it may be doubted, whether there ever was an alphabet ſo perfect, as to contain characters adapted to all the elementary ſounds of a language, and not one more or fewer. In moſt alphabets, perhaps in all, there are both defects and ſuperfluities.

Thus, in Engliſh, C, X, and Q are unneceſſary; and we have no ſingle character to mark the ſimple conſonant ſounds uſually expreſſed by TH, SH, and NG. Our alphabet of vowels is particularly imperfect; three diſtinct ſounds, or perhaps five, being ſignified by the firſt vowel letter, two or three

three by the ſecond, two by the third, five by the fourth, and two or three by the fifth *. Hence different vowels are often uſed to denote one and the ſame ſound. Thus in *cur*, *ſir*, *her*, *monk*, the ſame vowel ſound is heard, notwithſtanding the diverſity of the vowel letters: and in many words, vowels are ſeen, and conſonants too, which have no ſound at all; as E in *houſe*, A in *realm*, the ſecond O in *honour*, UGH in *though*, G in *gnomon*, K in *knowledge*, W in *know*, *blow*, &c. To which I may add, that ſome of our diphthongs are marked by ſingle vowels, as in the words, *muſe*, *mind*, *chyle*, *by*; and that we often uſe two vowel letters to ſignify a ſimple vowel ſound, as in *head*, *blood*, *good*, &c. But theſe and the like imperfections are not peculiar to Engliſh, but obtain more or leſs in all the tongues of Europe, and probably in all written languages whatever.

Nor is there any thing wonderful in this. There are not in Great Britain two pro-

* According to Kenrick, A has five ſounds, which are heard in the words *hat*, *hate*, *hard*, *what*, *ball*:—E has three, as in *me*, *met*, *her*:—I has two, as in *thin*, *thine*:—O has five, as in *no*, *not*, *ſoft*, *wolf*, *monk*:—U has three, as in *pull*, *up*, *muſe*; which laſt, however, is not a ſimple vowel, but a diphthongal ſound.—Y in *liberty* is a vowel; in *yonder*, a conſonant; and in *by*, *thy*, *my*, a diphthong. According to Johnſon, A has three ſounds, as in *malt*, *father*, *place*: E has two, as in *me*, *met*: I, two, as above: O, two, as in *got*, *drone*: and U, three, as above.

vinces, which do not differ in ſome particulars of pronunciation; and in moſt countries the modes of ſpeech, eſpecially while literature is in its infancy, are vague and changeable. Hence, when men begin to write their mother tongue, it may be ſuppoſed, that they will differ greatly in their ſpelling, and in their notions of the powers of the letters: and he, who is in other reſpects the moſt popular, will probably give the law in theſe particulars, however injudicious his ſpelling may be, and however inelegant his pronunciation. Then, a laudable regard to old authors, and to etymology, and a deſire to fix the language, will determine ſucceeding writers to retain the old ſpelling, even when the pronunciation has become different. Thus, the final E in *houſe*, *horſe*, &c. which was certainly pronounced in the age of Chaucer, and not wholly diſuſed in that of Wallis, we ſtill retain in writing, though it has been mute for more than a century. Nor have we laid aſide the GH in the words, *light*, *bright*, *ſigh*, *though*, &c. (which was alſo pronounced in the antient language) notwithſtanding that the guttural is now no more articulated in any part of the Britiſh empire, except Scotland. And, in the opinion of our beſt grammarians, the words *honour*, *authour*, *oratour*, &c. ought not to loſe the *u* they have been ſo long poſſeſſed of, becauſe they came to us, not from the Latin *honor*,

honor, *auctor*, *orator*, but from the French *honeur*, *auteur*, *orateur*.

Every thing deſerves praiſe, which is done with a view to make language durable; for on the permanency of any tongue depends that of the literature conveyed in it. And if new words, new letters, or new modes of ſpelling, might be introduced at pleaſure, language would ſoon be disfigured and altered; the old authors would erelong be laid aſide as unintelligible, and the new would be conſigned to oblivion before their time. Yet ſeveral attempts were made in the laſt century, to alter the ſpelling, and even the alphabet, of the Engliſh tongue. Sir Thomas Smith, Dr. Gill, and Charles Butler, thought it abſurd to ſpeak one way, and write another; and ſeem to have founded their reſpective plans of improvement upon this principle, that pronunciation ought to determine orthography: not conſidering that, as Dr. Johnſon well obſerves, "this is to "meaſure by a ſhadow, and take that for a "model or ſtandard, which is changing "while they apply it." For, according to this rule, pronunciation ought to be uniform throughout the kingdom; which, however deſirable, and however eaſy it may have appeared to ſome projectors, is, I fear, impracticable: and the alphabet, or the mode of ſpelling, muſt vary continually as the pronunciation varies; which would be a matter

of

of ſuch nicety, as no degree of human wiſdom could regulate. Beſides, reformations of this kind, ſuppoſed practicable, would obliterate etymology, and, with that, the remembrance of many old cuſtoms and ſentiments, would take away from the ſignificancy of many important words, and involve in confuſion both our grammar and our policy.

Let the language, therefore, be fixed, as much as poſſible, in the phraſeology, ſpelling, and alphabet; even though in all the three reſpects it might have been better than it is. A change in any of them would be dangerous, and produce no other good effect, than that of making *the language now ſpoken* more eaſy to foreigners: for to them, as well as to natives, it would increaſe the difficulty of ſtudying our literature in its full extent.—It may be ſaid, indeed, that all our good authors might be tranſcribed or tranſlated into the faſhionable letters and ſyllables. But this could not be. We have no criterion, univerſally acknowledged, for diſtinguiſhing good authors from bad: we have no laws to warrant the annihilation of property in books and manuſcripts: nor is it in the power of lawgivers, far leſs of philoſophers, to make a whole people renounce the written language of their fathers, wherein they find no inconvenience, and which is their only ſecurity for a great part of their

wealth,

wealth, and adopt in its ſtead a ſyſtem of cyphers and ſyllables, which they underſtand not, and of the utility of which they have had no experience *. In a word, our language is the baſis of Britiſh learning, as our laws are of the Britiſh government: if we value the ſuperſtructure, let us venerate the foundation, to which, if it is not compoſed of unſound materials, length of time will give more and more ſtability.

By attending to thoſe motions of the articulating organs, whereby the elementary ſounds of language are formed, ingenious men have contrived the art of teaching the deaf to ſpeak.

In order to this, the pupils are firſt taught to utter vocal ſound, and to know when they utter it: which, as an eminent profeſſor of the art informed me, is one of the moſt difficult parts of the whole procedure. For, as the ſcholar never heard any ſound, it muſt be long before he is made to know what his maſter means when he deſires him to exert his voice; and ſtill longer, before he can either do what is deſired, or know when, or how, he does it. Internal feel-

* The emperor Claudius, who though deſtitute of parts was not without ambition, aſpired to the honour of introducing three new letters into the Roman alphabet. They were in uſe during his reign; but, as the hiſtorian expreſſes it, were ſoon after *obliterated*.—Quæ uſui imperitante eo, mox obliteratæ, &c. Tacit. Annal. lib. xi.

ing,

ing, and external touch, muſt therefore ſupply the want of hearing. The voice is accompanied with certain perceptible tremors and tenſions of the organs in the mouth and throat: and when the ſcholar has long been made to attend to theſe, he comes at laſt to perceive, by the *tangible* effects of vocal ſound, *when* he utters it, and *how*.

The next point is, to inſtruct him in articulation. So far as this is performed by *viſible* contacts or applications of the organs, it is not difficult to conceive, by what ſteps he may be led to it. But many articulations depend upon the throat, the inner part of the noſe, and other organs that in ſpeaking are not viſible. In regard to theſe, the pupils muſt receive information by touch. The maſter articulates a certain ſound, and deſires them to feel the tremors occaſioned by it in his noſe, and the adjoining parts; and then, after laying their hands on the ſame part of their faces, to utter a variety of ſounds, by way of trial, till they come to utter that, which produces the ſame tremors in their own mouth and noſtrils; giving them, at the ſame time, directions for the management of their tongue and lips; and illuſtrating the nature of the ſound they are in queſt of, by that of ſome other kindred ſound wherewith they are already acquainted. And thus, after long time and much labour, they may be taught to articulate moſt of the

ſounds

ſounds that are annexed to the ſeveral letters of the alphabet; and to join articulations together, ſo as to form ſyllables and words.

But this is not enough. They muſt alſo learn to diſtinguiſh the vocal ſounds that are uttered by the perſon who ſpeaks to them. This they cannot do by hearing, for they are deaf; nor by touch, for it would be unſeemly, if they were to handle the noſe, cheeks, and lips, of the ſpeaker: it muſt therefore be done by ſight. The ſpeaker pronounces very ſlow, making a ſhort pauſe at the end of each word, and gives a ſtronger energy than uſual to the operation of every muſcle that ſeparates or brings together his organs: and the dumb man, looking him ſteadily in the face, which is expoſed to the light, gueſſes at his words from the viſible agitation of the ſeveral parts of his countenance.

It is obvious, that the acquiſition of this talent muſt be extremely difficult, the exerciſe of it moſt laborious, and the words diſtinguiſhable by it very few. Nor is it poſſible, perhaps, for a dumb man ever to acquire ſuch a readineſs in it as ſhall give more pleaſure than pain to his company, or be of any real benefit to himſelf. The time, therefore, that is employed by thoſe unfortunate perſons in this ſtudy, might, in my opinion, be more advantageouſly laid out, in acquiring the art of drawing, and the knowledge

of

of written language, whereof they are very capable, together with the ready uſe of a convenient ſyſtem of viſible ſigns, or ſymbols, for the communication of thought.

It may to ſome appear ſtrange at firſt hearing, that in the whole Engliſh tongue there ſhould be no more than thirty two ſimple elementary ſounds. But they, who know any thing of the powers of combined numbers, or who have conſidered in how many ways our elementary articulations may be formed into ſyllables and words, will not be ſurpriſed when they are told, that of theſe thirty two ſounds hundreds of languages might be compoſed, equally copious with the Engliſh, and all different from one another.

One of the ſimpleſt combinations in language is the Diphthong: which is formed, when two contiguous vowel ſounds coaleſce in ſuch a manner, as that, though they form but one ſyllable, the ſound of both, or at leaſt a double ſound, is diſtinctly heard; as *oy* in *joy*, *ow* in *cow*, *ui* in *juice*. A diphthong is ſometimes marked by three letters, as *eau* in *beauty*, *ieu* in *lieu*; and ſometimes by one vowel letter, as *u* in *muſe*, *i* in *mind*, *y* in *ſtyle*: but it derives its name, and nature, from its ſound, and not from its letters: for the word *diphthong* denotes a double vowel ſound; and whatever marks the coalition of two diſtinct vowel ſounds, whether it be two letters, or

three,

three, or one, is really the mark of a diphthong. And when a monophthong, or ſimple vowel ſound, is marked by two vowel letters, as *oo* in *good*, *ea* in *bread*; or by three, as *eau* in *beau*; the combination is not a diphthong, though it may be called a double or treble vowel.

Grammarians, indeed, ſpeak of triphthongs, or three monophthongal ſounds coaleſcing in one ſyllable; and give *eye* and *beau* as examples. But, notwithſtanding the number of the letters, *eye* is as much a diphthong as *i* in *mind*, or as our affirmative particle *ay*, (though in pronouncing the latter a peculiar ſtreſs is laid upon the ſound of the firſt vowel); and *eau* in *beau* is as truly a monophthong, as the interjection O.—Some triphthongs, however, there are in Engliſh, though but few; and thoſe, I think, are marked by a ſingle vowel letter. Such are the ſounds annexed to the vowels in the words *ſky* and *kind*: in which, the diphthong expreſſed by *y* in the one, and *i* in the other, is apparently introduced, in pronunciation, with ſomething of the ſound of the Engliſh *e* as heard in the words *he*, *ſhe*, *be*.

And here I muſt take notice of a ſlight inaccuracy, which many Grammarians both Latin and Engliſh have fallen into. The former tell us, and indeed with truth, that æ and œ are diphthongs, and yet in ſpeaking Latin make them ſimple vowel ſounds: and

the latter refer to the claſs of diphthongs *oo* in *good*, *ea* in *head*, *bread*, *realm*, and *ai* in *vain*, *plain*, &c; though the pronunciation of theſe is as truly monophthongal, or ſimple, as that of *u* in *pull*; *e* in *bed*, *bred*, *helm*; and *a* in *plane*, *vane*. In this particular, therefore, the Latin grammarian ought to reform his pronunciation; and the Engliſh, his account of the diphthong. For, that the Romans pronounced æ and œ as double vowel ſounds; the firſt ſimilar to our affirmative particle *ay*, and the laſt not unlike *oi* in *voice*, cannot, I think, be doubted. The firſt is ſometimes reſolved, by their beſt verſifiers Lucretius and Virgil, into two ſyllables, *materiæ* into *materiaï*, *aulæ* into *aulaï*, *auræ* into *auraï*; which I preſume would not have been done, if the ſound had been, as we make it, perfectly monophthongal. Nor, if they had pronounced *Cæſar*, as we do, *Ceſar* or *Keſar*, is it to be imagined that the Greeks would have expreſſed the vowel ſound of the firſt ſyllable of that name by two vowel letters *Kaiſar*. Nor would the Romans have transformed the Greek * *poinê* into *pœna*, or † *Philopoimên* into *Philopœmen*, if they had not pronounced *œ* as a diphthong. But this by the by.

Conſonants, by being joined to conſonants, produce many combinations of articulate ſound; and ſimple vowels, and diph-

* ποινη. † Φιλοποιμην.

thongs,

thongs, may be joined to single, or double, or treble consonants; and thus an endless variety of syllables may be formed: and a syllable may be joined to other syllables, or stand by itself, so as to form short or long words; and each vowel sound may be long, or short, and vary the import of the syllable accordingly. So that, though the number of elementary sounds is not great in any language, the variety of *possible* words, that may be formed by combining them, is in every language so great, as almost to exceed computation, and much more than sufficient to express all the varieties of human thought. But the *real* words, even of the most copious language, may without difficulty be numbered; for a good dictionary comprehends them all. In the English tongue, after deducting proper names, and the inflections of our verbs and nouns, I have reason to think, that they do not exceed forty thousand.

We must not, however, estimate the number of our ideas by that of our words; the former being beyond comparison more diversified than the latter. Many thoughts we express, not by particular terms appropriated to each, but by a periphrasis, or combination of terms, which under different forms of arrangement and connection may be applied to a great variety of different purposes; and many thoughts are communicated in tropes

and figures; and many may ſometimes be ſignified by one and the ſame word. There are few terms in language that have not more than one meaning; ſome have ſeveral, and ſome a great number. In how many different ways, and to how many different purpoſes, may the verbs *do*, *lie*, *lay*, and *take*, (for example) be applied! Johnſon's Dictionary will ſhow this, and much more of the ſame kind; and leave the reader equally aſtoniſhed at the acuteneſs of the lexicographer, and at the complex nature and uſe of certain minute parts of human ſpeech. Even of our prepoſitions (as will be obſerved hereafter) one has upwards of twelve, one more than twenty, and one no fewer than thirty different meanings. And yet, when we underſtand a language, we are not ſenſible of any perplexity ariſing from theſe circumſtances: all ambiguities of ſenſe being, in a correct ſtyle, prevented by what Horace calls *Callida junctura*, that is, by a right arrangement of the words, and other artifices of compoſition.

The quantity of diſtinct ſpeech that we pronounce with one effort of the articulating organs is called a *ſyllable*. In every ſyllable there muſt be one vowel ſound at leaſt; becauſe without an opening of the mouth there can be no diſtinct articulation. A ſyllable may be a ſingle vowel, as *a*, *o*; or a ſingle diphthong, as *ay*, *oi*; or either of theſe modified

fied by one or more conſonants, placed before it, or after it, or on both ſides of it:—as *to*, *of*; *boy*, *oyl*; *dog*, *foil*; *dry*, *art*; *ſwift*, *broils*, *ſtrength*.

Language is made up of words; and words are the ſmalleſt diviſions of ſpeech that have ſignification. Syllables, as ſuch, have no meaning; for a ſignificant ſyllable is a word. Every word means ſomething, either of itſelf, or as joined to other words; and words derive their meaning from the conſent and practice of thoſe who uſe them.

If one were to contrive a new language, one might make any articulate ſound the ſign of any idea: there would be no impropriety in calling oxen *men*, or rational beings by the name of *oxen*. But where a language is already formed, they who ſpeak it muſt uſe words in the cuſtomary ſenſe. By doing otherwiſe, they incur the charge, either of affectation, if they mean only to be remarkable, or of falſehood, if they mean to deceive. To ſpeak as others ſpeak, is one of thoſe tacit obligations, annexed to the condition of living in ſociety, which we are bound in conſcience to fulfil, though we have never ratified them by any expreſs promiſe; becauſe, if they were diſregarded, ſociety would be impoſſible, and human happineſs at an end. It is true, that, in a book of ſcience founded on definition, words may be uſed in any ſenſe, provided their meaning be explained: in this

caſe there is no falſehood, becauſe there is no intention to deceive: but, even in this caſe, if the common analogies of language were violated, the author would be juſtly blamed for giving unneceſſary trouble to his readers, and for endeavouring capriciouſly to abrogate a cuſtom, which univerſal uſe had rendered more reſpectable, as well as more convenient, than any other that he could ſubſtitute in its room.

A word may be a ſingle ſyllable; or it may conſiſt of two, or of ſeveral ſyllables. Hence, in reſpect of length, as well as of ſound, words admit of great variety.

Some have ſaid, that the words of barbarous nations are very long; and that, as moſt nations have at one time or other been barbarous, moſt primitive tongues in their uncultivated ſtate are remarkable for the extraordinary length of their words; but that, by refinement, and practice in ſpeaking and writing, theſe come in time to be abridged, and made more manageable. And it cannot be denied, that into common diſcourſe abbreviations of words are gradually introduced, which were not at firſt in the language.—But we find, that the radical words of antient tongues are rather ſhort than long. This is true of the Hebrew, and is ſaid to be true of the Chineſe. In the Greek and Latin, though ſome inflections of compound verbs ſhoot out to a great length, the primitive verbs, nouns, pronouns,

pronouns, and the moſt eſſential particles, are comparatively ſhort. Of the Engliſh too it has been obſerved, that its fundamental words of Saxon original are moſt of them monoſyllables. And though ſome words of inconvenient magnitude may be found in every tongue, as *notwithſtanding* and *nevertheleſs* in Engliſh, *verumenimvero* in Latin, and *concioſiacoſache* in Italian, (which by the by are made up of ſhort words joined together) yet it does not appear, that words are always improved by being ſhortened. On the contrary, our Engliſh abbreviations *dont*, *cant*, *ſhant*, &c. though they have long been uſed in converſation, are to this day intolerable in ſolemn ſtyle.

Travellers, indeed, inform us of certain words of monſtrous length, that are current in ſavage nations; that, for example, in the dialect of the Eſquimaux, *wonnaweucktuckluit* ſignifies *much*; and that, on the banks of the river Orellana in South America, the number *three* is denoted by a word of twenty letters, *poetazzzarorincouroac*. But is it certain, that thoſe travellers did not hear a ſentence, a circumlocution, or a deſcription, when they imagined they were hearing a ſingle word?—*A very great quantity* is a phraſe of the ſame import with *much*; and *the third part of the number nine* is a periphraſis for *three*. Suppoſe a foreigner, paſſionately fond of the marvellous, and who had formed a theory

concerning long words, and was determined to find them among us as well as in South America, ſhould, after a week's reſidence in London, take it in his head that the Engliſh expreſs *three* by a word of twenty-ſeven letters, and *much* by another of eighteen: would not ſuch a miſtake be natural enough in ſuch a perſon?—It is, I think, very improbable, that long words ſhould abound among barbarians. For ſhort ones are more obvious, and leſs troubleſome, and are withal capable of ſufficient variety. And we cannot imagine, that they, whoſe garments are but a rag, and whoſe lodgings a hole, ſhould affect ſuperfluities in their language.

Long words are ſaid to give dignity to language, and ſhort ones to be detrimental to harmony. And there is truth in the remark; but it muſt not be admitted without limitation. Many long ones render language heavy and unwieldy: and ſhort ones are not harſh, unleſs where, by beginning or ending with hard conſonants, they refuſe to coaleſce with the letters that go before or follow. For, in pronunciation, the voice does not make a pauſe at the end of every word; and when two or three little words run eaſily into one another, the effect in point of harmony is the ſame, as if one word of ſeveral ſyllables were ſpoken, inſtead of ſeveral words of one ſyllable. And therefore Engliſh lines of monoſyllables, though ſome criticks condemn them

them in poetry as diſſonant, *may* flow as eaſily and ſweetly as any other: as,

I live in hope, that all will yet be well.—
Arms and the man I ſing, who forced by fate.—

And I know not whether there be in the whole language a ſmoother paragraph than the following; in which, of eighty two words ſixty nine are monoſyllables.—" My beloved ſpake, " and ſaid unto me, Riſe up my Love, my " fair one, and come away: For lo, the " winter is paſt, the rain is over and gone; " the flowers appear on the earth, the time " of the ſinging of birds is come, and the " voice of the turtle is heard in our land: " The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, " and the vines with the tender grape give a " good ſmell: Ariſe, my Love, my fair one, " and come away."

The truth is, that a mixture of ſhorter with longer words may be neceſſary to harmony: but, in our language, a better ſound is heard from many ſhort words of Saxon original, if their initial and final articulations admit of an eaſy coaleſcence, than from a redundancy of long words derived from the Greek and Latin. For in Engliſh, though there is much Latin, and ſome Greek, yet the Saxon predominates; and its ſounds are moſt acceptable to a Britiſh ear, becauſe moſt familiar. And hence, with all its eaſe and apparent careleſneſs, the proſe of Dryden is incomparably more melodious, than that of the learned

learned and elaborate Sir Thomas Brown. For the former adheres, where he can, to plain words of Engliſh or Saxon growth; while the other is continually dragging in gigantick terms of Greek or Latin etymology †.

If a language were to be invented, and words lengthened and ſhortened upon principles of philoſophy, there can be no doubt, that ſuch as either have little meaning of their own, as articles, conjunctions, and prepoſitions, or continually recur in ſpeaking and writing, as auxiliary verbs and perſonal pronouns, ought to be ſhort; and that other words, of more important meaning, or leſs neceſſary uſe, may admit of a more complex articulation *. And in fact, though languages are formed gradually; and though their formation, depending upon cauſes too minute to be perceived, is ſaid to be accidental, or by chance; yet we find, that this principle has influence in moſt nations. Perſonal pronouns, articles, and auxiliary words, are commonly ſhort; and though ſome conjunctions are of unwieldy magnitude, the moſt neceſſary ones are manageable enough.

† Such as *commenſality*, *decorticated*, *diſſentaneous*, *diaphanity*, *ablactate*, *Stentorophonick*,—and I know not how many others.

* See Campbell's Philoſophy of Rhetorick. Book iii. chap. 4.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of Emphaſis, 1. *Rhetorical.* 2. *Syllabick, which is either Long-vowelled, or Short-vowelled.—Of the Numbers or meaſures of Engliſh Poetry, as depending on Emphaſis; their nature, and varieties.*

WORDS alone do not conſtitute ſpeech. To all the languages we know, and probably to all others, belong *Emphaſis* and *Accent*; whoſe nature and uſe may be explained as follows.

EMPHASIS, which is a ſtronger exertion of the voice upon ſome words and ſyllables than upon others, is neceſſary, to give ſpirit and propriety to pronunciation, by marking, firſt, the moſt important words in a ſentence; and, ſecondly, thoſe ſyllables in a word, which cuſtom may have diſtinguiſhed by a more forcible utterance.

Firſt: to ſhow the neceſſity of pronouncing ſome words of a ſentence with a ſtronger emphaſis than others, let us make a trial upon the ſeveral parts of this brief interrogatory, Do you walk to town to-day?* — and we ſhall find, that every variation of the em-

* See the Preceptor, vol. i. page 43. Introduction.

phaſis

phaſis gives a different meaning to the queſtion, and requires a different anſwer. If we exert our voice upon the pronoun, and ſay, "Do *you* walk to town to-day?" the anſwer might be, "No, but my ſervant does." If it be ſaid, "Do you *walk* to town to-day?"—it may be anſwered, "No, I ſhall ride." Let the queſtion be, "Do you walk *to town* to-day?"—the anſwer, if negative, may be, "No, I ſhall go down into the country." Laſtly, if we were aſked, "Do you walk to town *to-day?*"—we ſhould perhaps anſwer, "No, but I ſhall to-morrow." Again, let the emphaſis be twice applied, "Do you *walk* to town *to-day?*"—and an anſwer containing a double emphaſis may perhaps be requiſite; "No, *to-morrow* I ſhall *ride* thither." And if the ſame words were addreſſed to us without any emphaſis on the part of the ſpeaker, we ſhould be at a loſs what to anſwer, becauſe his meaning would appear ambiguous.

One of the greateſt niceties in the art of reading is the right application of the emphaſis. And of this they only are capable, who perfectly underſtand what they read, and attend to the full import of every clauſe, and of every word. If we read without underſtanding, or without attention, we continually miſapply the emphaſis; and the hearer, if he is not very acute, muſt often miſtake the ſenſe. And therefore I am ſurpriſed,

priſed, that Milton did not contrive a better expedient for ſupplying his loſs of ſight, than that of making his daughters read to him in Latin, Italian, Greek, and Hebrew; languages, whereof he had not taught them to know any thing but the letters. A hearer of ordinary talents could not put up with a reader who affixes no idea to what he articulates. Such readers muſt either puzzle, when they do not apply emphaſis, or miſlead, when they miſapply it. But Milton's memory and learning were almoſt as wonderful as his genius: and, after he grew blind, it is not likely, that he would deſire to hear any foreign books read to him, but ſuch as he was well acquainted with.

Children are not often taught to read with the proper emphaſis. Indeed, when books are put before them which they do not underſtand, it is impoſſible they ſhould. Let them, therefore, read nothing but what is level to their capacity; let them read ſlowly, and with attention to the meaning of every word; and let them be not only ſet right when they miſapply the emphaſis, but alſo cautioned againſt the oppoſite extremes of too forcible and too feeble an application of it; for by the former of theſe faults they become affected in their utterance, and by the latter inſipid. I may add, that the pronunciation ought not to be equally emphatical on all ſubjects. If we rehearſe the words

of ſorrow, humility, or love, a ſoft emphaſis, being the moſt natural, is the moſt graceful and expreſſive; but a more vigorous energy ſhould enforce the language of indignation, contempt, or earneſt remonſtrance. Moderation, however, is neceſſary in this as in other things. For when articulation becomes ſtrictly imitative, it is called theatrical, and gives offence in domeſtick life, becauſe inconſiſtent with that modeſty, which forms an eſſential part of true politeneſs.—Of the bad effects of theatrical imitation in the pulpit, I have ſpoken in another place *.

Hitherto we have conſidered emphaſis as affecting the pronunciation of *words*; and this may be called the *rhetorical emphaſis*. I now remark, in the ſecond place, that there are alſo *emphatick ſyllables*. In moſt words of more than one ſyllable, the voice is more vigorouſly exerted, and dwells longer, upon ſome of the component ſounds, than upon others; as upon the firſt of *blameleſs*, the ſecond of *revenge*, and the third of *magazine*. —Moreover, the firſt and third ſyllables of the word *melancholy* are pronounced more ſtrongly, though not more ſlowly, than the ſecond and fourth: and of the word *diſſipation* the firſt ſyllable has a forcible and quick utterance, and the third is forcible and ſlow.

For, in our tongue, there are two ſorts of ſyllabick emphaſis. The one, terminating

* Eſſay on Memory, chap. 3.

in a conſonant, is formed by a ſtronger or ſmarter exertion of the voice: the other, which frequently ends in a vowel or diphthong, is diſtinguiſhed by a longer continuance, as well as by a powerful energy. Thus the firſt ſyllable of *ſtudious* and of *nation* is emphatical and long; but the firſt ſyllable of *ſtudy*, and of *paſſion*, though emphatical, is not long.

This, however obvious, has not always been attended to. In moſt Engliſh Dictionaries, prior to that of Dr. Kenrick, the emphatick ſyllable has the ſame mark, whether it be long or ſhort: nay, ſome grammarians have told us, that the emphatick ſyllable in Engliſh is always long. But he, who compares the firſt ſyllable of *nation* with the firſt ſyllable of *paſſion*, will obſerve, that, though both are emphatical, the former is long and ends in a vowel ſound, and that the latter is ſhort or quick, and ends in the conſonant S.—It is true, that the long emphatick ſyllable often ends in a conſonant ſound, as in *ſevere*, *redeem*, *divine*, *benign*; but in this caſe, it is ſtill the vowel or diphthong that is lengthened.—It is alſo true, that the other ſyllabick emphaſis is ſometimes long, as in *event*, *neglect*; but here the vowel is obviouſly ſhort, and the protracted ſound reſts upon the conſonants, and is owing to their duplicity, which forms a colliſion of the articulating organs, and a neceſſary delay in the

the pronunciation. Syllables of this latter ſort are by the Latin grammarians ſaid to be *long by poſition*.

Emphatick ſyllables are by ſome called *accented*; which is improper; *accent* being a thing totally different, as will appear hereafter. And therefore, on account of their reference to accent or tone, the epithets *acute* and *grave*, whereby one author diſtinguiſhes the two ſorts of ſyllabick emphaſis, muſt be rejected.

If it be aſked, in what reſpects they are neceſſary or uſeful in language; I anſwer, firſt, that, by their means, one and the ſame word may be applied without inconvenience to different purpoſes: which, though not very material perhaps, is however of ſome benefit. Thus *ref-uſe* is a noun, and *re-fuſe* a verb; and the ſame diſtinction holds in *ſŭbjĕct* and *ſŭbjēct*, *ĭnſŭlt* and *ĭnſūlt*, *cŏnvĕrt* and *cŏnvērt*, and many others.

But ſecondly, Emphatick ſyllables are ſtill more uſeful, as on them depends, in a great meaſure, at leaſt in the modern tongues, and particularly in Engliſh, thoſe varieties in the ſound and motion of contiguous ſyllables, which give riſe to rhythm * and poetical harmony.

* Rhythm is that peculiar movement, of the notes in muſick, and of the ſyllables in poetry, which may be imitated by the drum, or by the fingers ſtriking on a board. There is rhythm even in proſe: as the continuities and inter-

mony. Nay, whether it be owing to the very act of breathing, or to habits we have contracted in the uſe of our mother tongue, we find it almoſt impoſſible to pronounce a number of ſignificant ſyllables, without giving more emphaſis to ſome than to others. Pronunciation without emphaſis, or the voice applied with equal force upon every ſyllable, would ſound very uncouth to our ear, and ſeem to reſemble articulations produced by mechaniſm, rather than the ſpeech of an intelligent being. Without emphaſis even muſick would be inſipid and inexpreſſive.

The Greeks and Romans were determined, in the formation of their poetical meaſures, by the *quantity*, that is, by the proportion of time, in which their ſyllables were pronounced. In this reſpect, they divided them into long and ſhort. A ſhort and a long ſyllable made what they called the Iambick foot; and ſix Iambick feet, or a ſhort and a long ſyllable ſix times repeated, formed their Iambick Trimeter, whereof the following line of Horace, when rightly pronounced according to the *quantity*, is an example,

Bĕātŭs īllĕ qūī prŏcūl nĕgōtĭīs.

Two long ſyllables made the foot Spondeus, and a long and two ſhort the Dactyl: and

intermiſſions of the voice in ſpeaking, and the variations ariſing from long and ſhort, or from emphatick and non-emphatick, ſyllables, may all be imitated in the ſame manner. Of the effects of rhythm in muſick, ſee an *Eſſay on Poetry and Muſick*. Part i. chap. 6. ſect. 2. § 4.

the verſe called Hexameter conſiſted of ſix feet, whereof any one of the firſt four might be either a Dactyl or a Spondee, the fifth was a dactyl, and a ſpondee the laſt. And thus, the iambick foot comprehending the time of three ſhort ſyllables, and the hexameter feet being each of them equal to four ſhort, or two long; it appears that the diviſions of the former were (to adopt a term of modern muſick) in *treble time*, and thoſe of the latter in *common time*.

But on what does the meaſure of Engliſh verſe depend?—Some have ſaid, on the number of ſyllables. But that is a miſtake.—The three following lines are of the ſame Iambick ſpecies; and yet, the firſt conſiſts of ten, the ſecond of nine, and the third of eight, ſyllables:

And many a youth, and many a maid
Were dancing in the neighbouring ſhade,
In holiday attire array'd.

Of theſe four lines the firſt and third have eight ſyllables, and the ſecond and fourth have nine; yet the meaſure is the ſame throughout;

Yet do not my folly reprove;
She was fair, and my paſſion begun;
She ſmiled, and I could not but love;
She is faithleſs, and I am undone.

The four that follow might all ſtand in the ſame verſe of the ſame ſong, and be ſung to the ſame tune, though in the firſt there are eleven ſyllables, in the ſecond twelve, thirteen in the third, and fourteen in the laſt.

And when I am gone, may the better ſort ſay,
He had ſenſe, he was modeſt, and harmleſly gay,
And a kind, unaffected, and good honeſt fellow,
In the morning when ſober, in the evening when mellow.

Our heroick verſe, too, may conſiſt of ten ſyllables (which is the ſimpleſt and moſt common form of it), or of eleven, or of twelve: as,

Arms and the man I ſing, who forced by fate.—
Bellowing along the plains the monſter ran.—
Many a wide lawn, and many a waving grove.—

The following has been given, as a heroick line of fourteen ſyllables,

And many an humourous, many an amourous lay.

And, admitting a ſupernumerary ſyllable, the ſecond line of this couplet might be tolerated, though it has fifteen:

The hapleſs poet pen'd, alas! for pity,
Full many an amorous, many a querulous ditty.

It has indeed been thought by ſome criticks, that in our heroick verſe, when the ſyllables exceed ten in number, there muſt be redundant vowels, which in reading are

ſuppreſſed or cut off, and inſtead of which, in printed books, the apoſtrophe is often inſerted. But, whatever be the caſe in printing, and writing, this is contrary to the practice of all good readers; they pronounce every ſyllable diſtinctly, and by ſo doing gratify our ear much more than if they had made the ſuppoſed eliſions. For, how ridiculous would it be, if one were to read the laſt line thus!

Full man' an am'rous, man' a quer'lous ditty.

This might indeed be called meaſure, but it could not be called Engliſh.

Some have imagined, that the rhythm of our verſe depends, like that of the Greek and Latin, not upon the number, but upon the *quantity*, of ſyllables. And it is true, that an Engliſh heroick line may be made up of a ſhort and long ſyllable five times repeated; in which caſe we may ſay, without any impropriety, that it is a pure Iambick of five feet: as,

Dĕſpaīr, rĕvēnge, rĕmōrſe tŏrmēnt thĕ ſōūl.

But it is no leſs true, that an Engliſh heroick line *may* be compoſed, wherein there ſhall not be one long ſyllable, except the laſt: as,

The buſy bodies flutter tattle ſtill.

Whatever may be ſaid of this line in other reſpects, it will at leaſt be allowed to be of the Engliſh heroick ſpecies: and yet, if we were

were to pronounce the ſecond, fourth, ſixth, and eighth ſyllables as if they were long, the articulation would be ridiculous:

The buzz-y bode-ies flutt-er tatt-le ſtill.

I grant, that thoſe heroick lines, which abound in ſyllables that are at once emphatical and ſhort, are not ſo proper for expreſſing ſentiments or images of dignity: yet ſtill they are of the heroick ſpecies; and no critick will ſay, that they are inconſiſtent with rule, or not juſtifiable by authority.

On what then does the meaſure of Engliſh verſes depend? Not on the *number* of the ſyllables, as we have ſeen: nor on their *quantity*; ſince an Engliſh heroick line may conſiſt of five ſhort and five long ſyllables, or of nine ſhort and one long ſyllable.—In fact, this matter is regulated by the *emphaſis*. In our verſe, there muſt be in every foot one emphatick ſyllable whether long or ſhort. And the alternate ſucceſſion of emphatick and non-emphatick ſyllables is as eſſential to Engliſh numbers, as that of long and ſhort is to the Latin and Greek.—Thus in that line,

The buſy bodies flutter tattle ſtill,

though there is not one long ſyllable till you come to the end, there are five emphatick ſyllables, each of them preceded by a ſyllable of no emphaſis. And in the other line,

Deſpair, remorſe, revenge, torment the ſoul,

there are alſo five emphatick ſyllables, each preceded by a non-emphatick ſyllable.

In what reſpect, then, do theſe two lines (which are allowed to be of the ſame ſpecies) reſemble each other, and in what reſpect do they differ? They differ in this reſpect, that one is made up of ſhort and long ſyllables alternately diſpoſed, while the other has in it only one long ſyllable: They agree in this, that both the one and the other is compoſed of non-emphatick and emphatick ſyllables placed alternately. It follows, that, though long and ſhort, or ſhort and long, ſyllables *may ſometimes* form the rhythm of Engliſh verſe, yet that which *invariably* and *eſſentially* forms it, is the interchange of emphatick and non-emphatick ſyllables.

In lines, that are intended to imitate the ſenſe by the articulation, or to be remarkably conciſe and ſignificant, an exuberance of emphatick ſyllables may ſometimes be found. But ſuch lines, whatever merit they may have in reſpect of energy, are not well-tuned; and perhaps could hardly be known to be verſe, if we did not find them among other verſes. The imperfection of their harmony, however, we overlook, if they have any other beauty to counterbalance it. Such is this of Milton:

Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and ſhades
of death.

And

And ſuch is that, in a late Prologue, which I have heard Mrs Abingdon pronounce very humouroufly:

— Some great fat wife of ſome great fat ſhopkeeper.

Our language abounds in words of one ſyllable, many of which, being of ambiguous quantity, have no other emphaſis, but the rhetorical, which is fixed upon them by the ſenſe. In lines of monoſyllables, therefore, that are well-tuned, thoſe words which, by the rule of the verſe would have the ſyllabick emphaſis, have alſo the rhetorical emphaſis from the importance of their ſignification. If we were to miſtake the following line for proſe,—

The ſun was ſet, and all the plains were ſtill,

yet, if we read it with underſtanding, the rhetorical emphaſis, coinciding with the ſyllabick, and having indeed the ſame effect, would prove it to be poetical, and of the heroick ſpecies.

I ſhall conclude this part of the ſubject with two remarks. The firſt is, that though our poetry derives its meaſure from the emphaſis of ſyllables, and the Greek and Latin theirs from the quantity, we muſt not look upon the former as barbarous, and upon the latter as alone ſuſceptible of true harmony: the only inference we can reaſonably make is, that Greek and Latin verſes are more uniform than ours in reſpect of time.

The rhythm of ſounds may be marked by the diſtinction of loud and ſoft, as well as by that of long and ſhort. Every nation has a right to determine for itſelf in theſe matters; and it is probable, that the Engliſh numbers are as delightful to us, as the Latin and Greek were to the Romans and Grecians. In like manner, though rhimes are intolerable in antient poetry, it does not follow that they are contemptible in themſelves: moſt modern nations have them, and children and peaſants are charmed with them; which could not be, if they had not in certain circumſtances the power of pleaſing.

My ſecond remark is, that though thoſe terms in antient grammar, *trochæus*, *iambus*, *dactylus*, *anapæſtus*, *ſpondæus*, &c. do properly ſignify certain limited arrangements of *long* and *ſhort* ſyllables, it can do no harm to adopt them in Engliſh proſody. For our emphatick ſyllables are often long, and our non-emphatick ſyllables are often ſhort; and where this is the caſe, we uſe theſe terms without impropriety. And where this is not the caſe, if we call that foot a *trochee* (for example) which conſiſts of an emphatick and non-emphatick ſyllable, both of them ſhort, as *body*, we do not depart from the original meaning of words more than is frequently done, without blame, on other occaſions.

In fact, the cuſtoms of different countries are ſo different, that when we borrow words from

from a foreign tongue, it is not always poſſible to confine them to their primitive ſenſe. With us, an *advocate* is one who pleads a cauſe in a court of judicature. An advocate in antient Rome was one, who aſſiſted with his countenance and advice the perſon who was obliged to appear before the judges, whether he ſpoke in his behalf or not.

Let us then have our trochees, iambuſes, and anapeſts, and our trochaick, iambick, and anapeſtick meaſures: only let it be remembered, that, in Engliſh proſody, a trochee is either a long and ſhort, (as *lowly*), or an emphatick and non-emphatick, ſyllable, (as *body*); an iambus, the reverſe, as *renown*, *repel*; an anapeſt, an iambus preceded by a ſhort ſyllable, as *magazine*; and a dactyl, a trochee followed by a ſhort ſyllable, as *thunderer*, *profligate*.

As our poetical numbers depend upon the alternate ſucceſſion of emphatick and non-emphatick ſyllables, it may be proper, before I proceed to the ſubject of *accent*, to give ſome account of the various ſorts of meaſure, that have been eſtabliſhed in Engliſh poetry; in deſcribing which, I muſt be underſtood to uſe the words trochee, iambus, dactyl, and anapeſt, in the ſenſe juſt now explained. And I ſhall take the liberty to mark our *rhythmical emphaſis*, and *the want of it*, by the ſame characters, which

in

in Latin prosody denote *long* and *short* syllables.

English poetical measure may be divided into four kinds, Dactylick, Iambick, Trochaick, and Anapestick.

I. The Dactylick measure being very uncommon, I shall give only one example of one species of it, which I find in Dryden's *Albion and Albanius*.

Frōm thĕ lŏw pālăce ŏf ōld făthĕr Ōceăn
Come we in pity your cares to deplore;
Sea-racing dolphins are train'd for our motion,
Moony tides swelling to roll us ashore.

II. The Iambick is of all measures the most natural; for, as Aristotle observes, we often fall into it in our ordinary discourse. Greek and Latin hexameters, and our own trochaick and anapestick numbers, are more artificial, because more unlike the cadences of conversation. Our Iambicks we may subdivide into species, according to the number of feet or syllables whereof they consist; and I shall follow the same rule of arrangement in describing the other measures.

1. The shortest form of the English Iambick consists of an iambus with an additional short syllable; as

Dis-

Dĭſdāĭnĭng,
Complaining,
Conſenting,
Repenting.

We have no poem of this meaſure, but it may be met with in ſtanzas. The example is taken from a ſong in the maſk of Comus.

2. The ſecond form of our Iambick is alſo too ſhort to be continued through any great number of lines; though in the following example it has a very good effect. It conſiſts of two iambuſes.

Wĭth rāvĭſh'd ēārs
The monarch hears,
Aſſ-umes the God,
Af-fects to nod.

It ſometimes takes, or may take, an additional ſhort ſyllable; as,

Ŭpōn ă mōūntăin
Beſide a fountain.

3. The third form conſiſts of three iambuſes:

Nŏ wār, ŏr bāttlĕ's ſōūnd,
Was heard the world a-round.

with ſometimes an additional ſhort ſyllable; as,

Yĕ lāys nŏ lōngĕr lāngŭiſh,
For nought can cure my anguiſh.

4. The

4. The fourth form is made up of four iambuſes, with ſometimes an additional ſyllable, which gives a pleaſing variety.

Ŏr whēthĕr, ās ſŏme ſāgĕs ſīng,
The frolick wind, that breathes the ſpring,
Young Zephyr with Aurora playing, &c.

This meaſure, which we uſe both in burleſque and in ſerious poetry, is the ſame with the Iambick Dimeter of the antients; whereof, in its pureſt form, this is an example:

Ĭnārſĭt āēſtŭōſĭūs.

5. The fifth ſpecies of Engliſh Iambick is no other than our common meaſure for heroick poetry and tragedy. In its pureſt, or ſimpleſt, form it conſiſts of five iambuſes:

Thĕ dūmb ſhăll ſīng, thĕ lāme hĭs crūtch fŏregō.

but, by the admiſſion of other feet, as trochees, dactyls, and anapeſts, is capable of more than thirty varieties. Indeed, moſt of our common meaſures may be varied in the ſame way, as well as by the different poſition of their pauſes. And ſuch varieties, when ſkilfully introduced, give wonderful energy to Engliſh, Greek, and Latin numbers; and have, for this reaſon, been ſtudiouſly ſought after by Homer, Virgil, Milton, Dryden, and all other harmonious poets: variety being the ſoul of harmony, and nothing in language or in muſick more tireſome to the ear

than an uniform ſameneſs of ſound and meaſure.—Our heroick verſe is ſometimes lengthened out by an additional ſhort ſyllable, and then becomes nearly the ſame with that of the modern Italians.

'Tis heaven itſelf that points out an hereafter.—
Che 'l gran ſepolchro liberò di Chriſto.

But in Engliſh, this is more common in blank verſe, than in rhime; and in tragedy, than in the epick or didactick poem; and among tragedians it is leſs faſhionable now, than it was formerly.

6. The ſixth form of our Iambick is commonly called the Alexandrine meaſure; becauſe, ſay the criticks, (but on what authority I know not) it was firſt uſed in a poem called Alexander. It conſiſts of ſix iambuſes.

Fŏr thōū ărt būt ŏf dūſt; bĕ hūmblĕ, ānd bĕ wīſe.

It is introduced ſometimes in heroick rhime; and, when ſparingly, and with judgment, occaſions an agreeable variety.

Waller was ſmooth; but Dryden taught to join
The varying verſe, the full reſounding line,
The long majeſtick march, and energy divine.

Spenſer makes it the laſt line of his great ſtanza; where indeed it has a very happy effect. By the ſame artifice, Milton gives ſuperlative elevation to ſome of his ſtanzas on the Nativity:

But firſt to thoſe ychain'd in ſleep [the deep.
The wakeful trump of doom ſhall thunder through

and Gray, to the endings of his Pindarick meaſures. This verſe is generally pleaſing, when it concludes a poetical ſentence of dignity: as where the aged champion in Dryden's Virgil reſigns his arms, with a reſolution not to reſume them any more:

Take the laſt gift theſe wither'd arms can yield,
Thy gauntlets I reſign, and here renounce the field.

In meaſure and number of feet it is the ſame with the pure Iambick trimeter of the Greeks and Romans; of which every ſecond line of the ſixteenth epode of Horace is an example:

Sŭīs ĕt īpſă Rōmă vīrĭbus rŭīt.

Some criticks confound our Alexandrine with the French heroick verſe. But the latter, though it ſometimes contains the ſame number of ſyllables, is not Iambick at all, but rather Anapeſtick, having for the moſt part two ſhort for one long ſyllable, and in rhythm correſponds nearly to the following:

Now ſee, when they meet, how their honours behave:
Noble captain, your ſervant: Sir Arthur, your ſlave.
Pray how does my lady? My wife's at your ſervice.
I think I have ſeen her picture by Jervis.

The Alexandrine, like other Engliſh Iambicks, may occaſionally take an additional ſhort ſyllable:

With

With freedom by my ſide, and ſoft-eyed Melancholy.

7. The ſeventh and laſt form of our Iambick meaſure is made up of ſeven iambuſes:

Thĕ Lōrd dĕſcēndĕd frōm ăbōve, ănd bōw'd thĕ
hēāvĕns hīgh,

which was antiently written in one line; but is now for the moſt part broken into two, the firſt containing four feet, and the ſecond three. Chapman's tranſlation of Homer's Iliad is the longeſt work I have ſeen in this meaſure. It is now conſidered as a Lyrick verſe; and is very popular, and indeed very pleaſing.

III. The ſhorteſt Trochaick verſe in our language is that uſed by Swift in a burleſque poem called a Lilliputian Ode, conſiſting of one trochee and a long ſyllable.

Īn ămāze
Loſt I gaze.

This meaſure is totally void of dignity, and cannot be uſed on any ſerious occaſion. I am therefore ſurpriſed, that Brown, in his excellent ode on the Cure of Saul, ſhould have adopted it in a ſpeech aſcribed to the Supreme Being:

Tumult ceaſe.
Sink to peace.

2. The ſecond Engliſh form of the pure Trochaick conſiſts of two feet, and is likewiſe too brief for any ſerious purpoſe;

Ŏn thĕ mōūntăin,
By a fountain:

or of two feet and an additional long ſyllable:

Ĭn thĕ dāys ŏf ōld
Stories plainly told
Lovers felt annoy.

Theſe three lines are from an old ballad: the meaſure is very uncommon.

3. The third ſpecies conſiſts of three trochees;

Whēn thĕ ſēās wĕre rōārĭng,
Phyllis lay deploring:

or of three trochees with an additional long ſyllable;

Thēē thĕ vōīce thĕ dānce ŏbēy.

This is often mixed with the Iambick of four feet, and makes an agreeable variety, when judiciouſly introduced, as in the *Allegro* and *Penſeroſo* of Milton;

Iamb. But come, thou goddeſs fair and free,
In heaven ycleped Euphroſyne.
Troch. Come, and trip it as you go;
On the light fantaſtick toe.

4. The fourth Trochaick ſpecies conſiſts of four trochees:

Dāys ŏf ēāſe ănd nīghts ŏf plēāſŭre.

Which followed alternately by the preceding, forms a beautiful Lyrick verſe, whereof we have

have a ſpecimen in one of the fineſt ballads in the Engliſh language:

Ās nĕar Pōrtŏbēllŏ lўĭng Ōn thĕ gēntlў̆ ſwēllĭng
flōōd
At midnight with ſtreamers flying Our triumphant navy rode.

It is remarkable, that (as Mr. Weſt has ſomewhere obſerved) the ſame meaſure occurs in the Greek tragedians, as in this of Euripides:

* Proſkunô s' anax nomoiſi barbaroiſi proſpesôn.

And there is an elegant Latin poem called *Pervigilium Veneris*, commonly aſcribed to Catullus; of which, allowing for ſome varieties incident to the Latin Trochaick verſe, the meaſure is the ſame:

Ver novum, ver jam canorum; vere nubent alites;
Vere concordant amores; vere natus orbis eſt.

With an additional long ſyllable, our fourth Trochaick ſpecies would be as follows:

Īdlĕ, āftĕr dīnnĕr, īn hĭs chāīr,
Sat a farmer, ruddy, fat, and fair.

But this meaſure is very uncommon.

5. So is the fifth Trochaick ſpecies, conſiſting of five trochees; whereof I do not remember to have ſeen a ſpecimen in any printed poem.

Āll thăt wālk ŏn fōōt ŏr rīde ĭn chārĭŏts,
All that dwell in palaces or garrets.

* Προσκυνω σ' αναξ νομοισι βαρβαροισι προσπεσων.

This ſort of verſe, with an additional long ſyllable, might be thus exemplified:

Plēāſănt wās thĕ mōrnĭng, ānd thĕ mōnth wăs Mā̄y,
Colin went to London in his beſt array.

Some Scotch ballads are in this meaſure; but I know not whether I have ever ſeen a ſpecimen in Engliſh.

6. The ſixth form of the pure Engliſh Trochaick conſiſts of ſix trochees; whereof the following couplet is an example:

Ōn ă mōūntăin ſtrētch'd bĕnēāth ă hōārў̆ wīllŏw
Lay a ſhepherd ſwain, and view'd the rolling billow.

which is, I think, the longeſt Trochaick line that our language admits of.

IV. The ſhorteſt poſſible Anapeſtick verſe muſt be a ſingle anapeſt:

Bŭt ĭn vāīn
They complain.

But this meaſure is ambiguous: for, by laying the emphaſis on the firſt and third ſyllables, we might make it Trochaick. And therefore the firſt and ſimpleſt form of our anapeſtick verſe is made up of two anapeſts:

Bŭt hĭs cōūrăge găn fāīl,
For no arts could avail.

or of two anapeſts with an additional ſhort ſyllable:

Thĕn hĭs cōūrăge găn fāīl him,
For no arts could avail him,

2. The

2. The ſecond conſiſts of three anapeſts:

Wĭth hĕr mīēn ſhĕ ĕnāmoŭrs thĕ brāve;
With her wit ſhe engages the free,
With her modeſty pleaſes the grave;
She is every way pleaſing to me.

This is a delightful meaſure, and much uſed in paſtoral ſongs. Shenſtone's ballad in four parts, from which theſe lines are quoted, is an exquiſite ſpecimen. So is the Scotch ballad of *Tweedſide*, and Rowe's *Deſpairing beſide a clear ſtream*; which laſt is perhaps the fineſt love-ſong in the world. And that the ſame meaſure is well ſuited to burleſque, appears from the very humourous ballad called *The tippling Philoſophers*; which begins thus, *Diogenes ſurly and proud*, &c.—Obſerve, that this, like all the other anapeſtick forms, often (indeed for the moſt part) takes an iambus in the firſt place,

Dĕſpāīrĭng bĕfīde ă clĕar ſtrēam;

and formerly in the firſt and third,

Grĭm kīng ŏf thĕ ghōſts, măke hāſte
And bring hither all your train:

But this laſt variety is unpleaſing to a modern ear.—With an additional ſhort ſyllable it is as follows:

Săÿs mў ūnclĕ, Ĭ prāy yŏu dĭſcōvĕr
Why you pine and you whine like a lover:

which, uſed alternately with the preceding, makes the meaſure of the witty ballad of

Molly Mog, written by Gay, and often imitated.

3. The third form of the pure Engliſh anapeſtick conſiſts of four anapeſts:

Ăt thĕ clōſe ŏf thĕ dāy, whĕn thĕ hāmlĕt ĭs ſtĭll.—
If I live to grow old, as I find I go down.—

This meaſure, which reſembles the French heroick verſe, is common in Engliſh ſongs and ballads, and other ſhort compoſitions both comical and ſerious. It admits a ſhort ſyllable at the end,

On the cold cheek of Death ſmiles and roſes are
blending:

and ſometimes alſo between the ſecond and third foot,

Ĭn thĕ mōrnĭng whĕn ſōbĕr, ĭn thĕ ēvenĭng whĕn
mēllŏw:

which is the longeſt form of the regular Anapeſtick in the Engliſh language.

To one or other of theſe ſeven Iambick, ſix Trochaick, and three Anapeſtick, ſpecies, every line of Engliſh poetry, if we except thoſe few that are compoſed of dactyls, may be reduced. I have given only the ſimpleſt form of each. The ſeveral licences or variations, that theſe ſimple forms admit of, might be without difficulty enumerated: but I cannot at preſent enter into the niceties of Engliſh proſody.

Sidney

Sidney endeavoured to bring in Engliſh hexameters, and has given ſpecimens of them in the *Arcadia*. And Wallis, in his grammar, tranſlates a Latin hexameter,

Quid faciam? moriar? et Amyntam perdet Amyntas?

into an Engliſh one,

What ſhall I do? ſhall I die? ſhall Amyntas murder Amyntas?

Mr. Walpole, in his catalogue of Royal and Noble authors, aſcribes the following to Queen Elizabeth:

Perſius a crab-ſtaff, bawdy Martial, Ovid a fine wag.

But this ſort of verſe has never obtained any footing in our poetry: and I think I could prove, from the peculiarities of its rhythm, that it never can.

So much for the nature and uſe of EMPHASIS: which I divided into *Rhetorical* and *Syllabick*; ſubdividing the latter into the *long-vowelled* emphatick ſyllable, which is always long, and the *ſhort-vowelled* emphatick ſyllable, which, when long, is made ſo by the complexneſs of the final conſonants.

CHAP. V.

Of Accent. Its nature and uſe.—Standard of Pronunciation.

EMPHASIS is the work of the lungs; but ACCENT is performed by the contraction or dilatation of the glottis. For, while we ſpeak with underſtanding, our voice is continually varying, not only its emphaſis, but alſo its *tone*, from acute to grave, and from grave to acute. This is Accent. Inaccurate obſervers are not ſenſible of it in themſelves, but think they ſpeak without any tone; though at the ſame time they allow, that people who come from a diſtance have a tone in their ſpeech, that is perceptible enough, and not very agreeable. And the ſtranger complains of their accent in the ſame terms, and with equal juſtice.

Thus I have heard a man of Edinburgh ſay, We have no tone; our voice in ſpeaking is uniform, and not more grave, or more acute at one time, than at another; but go to Glaſgow, and there you will hear a tone; or go to Aberdeen, and you will hear a tone ſtill more remarkable, though of a different kind. Nay, a Londoner, a man of wit and genius, affirmed in my hearing, that the Engliſh ſpoken in the metropolis

was

was for this particular reaſon the moſt elegant, becauſe there, in polite company, the ſpeech was unaccented, whereas, in every other part of the Britiſh empire, people ſpoke with a tone. And a clergyman of Virginia aſſured me very ſeriouſly, that the Engliſh of that province was the beſt in the world; and aſſigned the ſame reaſon in favour of the Virginian pronunciation. But every word theſe gentlemen ſpoke was to my ear a convincing proof, that they were miſtaken. It is true, the North-American Engliſh accent is not ſo animated, as that of Middleſex, and the adjoining counties; but it is very perceptible notwithſtanding. In fact, there is no ſuch thing in language as monotony, or a continuation of the ſame note in ſpeech, without ever riſing above, or falling below it. Some children are taught to read in this manner; but their pronunciation is inſipid and ridiculous. And though a man, who has a muſical ear, and the command of his voice, might no doubt utter many words without any variation of accent, yet, if he were to ſpeak ſo in company, he would be ſuppoſed to have loſt his wits.

But, if every body ſpeak with a tone, why, it may be ſaid, does not every body perceive his own, as well as his neighbour's? It may be anſwered, that ſome, nay that many, perſons do perceive their own accent; and that they, who do not, become inſen-

ſible of it by habit. We ſometimes meet with thoſe who have acquired a cuſtom of ſpeaking very loud, or very low, and yet are not ſenſible, that they ſpeak lower or louder than other people. Nay profane ſwearers have been heard to affirm with an oath, that they were not ſwearing. Our native accent, eſpecially if we have never been from home, being continually in our ear, it is no wonder that we ſhould not diſcern its peculiarities. But let a man, who has been born and bred in Aberdeen, live two or three years in Edinburgh or London; and he ſhall become both inſenſible to the tone of the place of his reſidence, and alſo ſenſible of the accent that adheres to the dialect of his native town. In England, in Ireland, in the ſouth and in the north of Scotland, the people ſpeak dialects of one and the ſame language: and yet it is not difficult to know, by the tone of his voice in ſpeaking, even before we hear him ſo plainly as to diſtinguiſh the words, whether the ſpeaker be of England or of Ireland, a native of Lothian, or of Kincardineſhire, of Aberdeen, or of Inverneſs. And if even the provincial dialects of the ſame tongue are diſtinguiſhable by their accents, we may with reaſon conclude, that the languages of different nations will be more remarkably diſtinguiſhed in this way: which in fact is found to be the caſe.

Of all the nations upon earth, the antient Greeks ſeem to have been the moſt attentive to language. Their own they ſtudied, both in the compoſition, and in the pronunciation, with extraordinary care. The tones of it could not eſcape the notice of that ſagacious people. In order to make theſe of eaſier acquiſition to ſtrangers, they did what no other nation ever thought of doing, they uſed in writing certain characters, ſtill retained in their books, and called the Greek accents, of which the meaning was, to regulate the tone of the voice in ſpeech. We know they were invented for this purpoſe; though we cannot now make any uſe of them in our pronunciation of the Greek tongue.

It has been ſaid, that the ſyllable marked with the *acute* accent was pronounced four or five notes higher than the non-accented ſyllables; that the *grave* accent ſignified a fall of the voice through the ſame interval nearly; and that the *circumflex* denoted a riſe followed by a fall, which, as it took up double the time of a ſimple fall or riſe, made the ſyllable ſo accented neceſſarily long. But I am not ſatisfied with this account: for the paſſage quoted by a learned author, from Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, in proof of it, is very obſcure. At any rate, theſe marks could have regulated the ſyllabick accents only: whereas, with us, accent is more diſtinguiſhable in the cadence of words and phraſes,

phraſes *, than in ſyllables. Be this, however, as it will (for I affirm nothing poſitively in a matter ſo little known) it is evident, that the Latin word *accentus* (from *ad* and *cantus*), and the correſpondent term in Greek † *prosôdia* (from *pros* and *ôdê*), muſt, in their primitive ſignification, have had a reference to ſong, or muſical tone, and not (as ſome have thought) to thoſe energies of the human voice, which in the former chapter are expreſſed by the word Emphaſis.

But let it be obſerved, that though in ſpeech the voice is continually varying its

* Mr. Sheridan, in thoſe elegant Lectures which I heard him deliver at Edinburgh about twenty years ago, diſtinguiſhed (if I rightly remember) the Engliſh interrogatory accent from the Iriſh and the Scotch, in this manner. His example was: "How have you been this great while?"—in pronouncing which, he obſerved, that towards the end of the ſentence an Engliſhman lets his voice fall, an Iriſhman raiſes his, and a Scotchman makes his voice firſt fall and then riſe. The remark is well founded; but it is difficult to expreſs in unexceptionable terms a matter of ſo great nicety. I ſhall only add, that what is here ſaid of the Scotch accent, though it may hold true of the more ſoutherly provinces, is by no means applicable to the dialects that prevail in Aberdeenſhire, and other parts of the north: where the voice of the common people, in concluding a clauſe or ſentence, riſes into a very ſhrill and ſharp tone without any previous fall. "You bark in your "ſpeech," ſays a man of Edinburgh to one of Aberdeen: "And you growl and grumble in yours," replies the Aberdonian. In Inverneſs-ſhire, and the weſtern parts of Moray, the accents become totally different, and reſemble the tones and aſpirations of the Erſe.

† προσωδια, from προς *ad*, and ωδη *cantus*.

tone,

tone, and is ſometimes more acute, and at other times more grave, it does not, in modern languages at leaſt, aſcend or deſcend, by thoſe muſical intervals which are called notes, but riſes and falls by degrees of variation incomparably more minute, and which our muſical language has no terms nor ſymbols to expreſs. A muſician, ſounding the ſtring of a violin by drawing his bow acroſs, and at the ſame time making his finger *ſlide* up and down the ſtring without *lifting* it, would produce a ſort of ſound ſomewhat ſimilar, in its *mode* of riſing and falling, to thoſe varieties of accent which take place in language. An attempt has lately been made by Mr. Steele, to expreſs certain accents of the Engliſh tongue by a new-invented ſort of written characters. The work, I hear, is very ingenious; but, as I have not ſeen it, I can ſay nothing more about it.

From what has been ſaid, we may learn, that, as every nation and province has a particular accent, and as no man can ſpeak intelligibly without one, we ought not to take offence at the tones of a ſtranger, nor give him any ground to ſuſpect, that we are diſpleaſed with, or even ſenſible of them. However diſagreeable his accent may be to us, ours, it is likely, is equally ſo to him. The common rule of equity, therefore, will recommend mutual forbearance in this matter, To ſpeak with the Engliſh, or with the

Scotch, accent, is no more praiſeworthy, or blameable, than to be born in England, or Scotland: a circumſtance, which, though the ringleaders of ſedition, or narrow-minded bigots, may applaud or cenſure, no perſon of ſenſe, or common honeſty, will ever conſider as imputable to any man.

Are, then, all provincial accents equally good? By no means. Of accent, as well as of ſpelling, ſyntax, and idiom, there is a ſtandard in every polite nation. And, in all theſe particulars, the example of approved authors, and the practice of thoſe, who, by their rank, education, and way of life, have had the beſt opportunities to know men and manners, and domeſtick and foreign literature, ought undoubtedly to give the law. Now it is in the metropolis of a kingdom, and in the moſt famous ſchools of learning, where the greateſt reſort may be expected of perſons adorned with all uſeful and elegant accompliſhments. The language, therefore, of the moſt learned and polite perſons in London, and the neighbouring Univerſities of Oxford and Cambridge, ought to be accounted the ſtandard of the Engliſh tongue, eſpecially in accent and pronunciation: ſyntax, ſpelling, and idiom, having been aſcertained by the practice of good authors, and the conſent of former ages.

And there are two reaſons for this preference. One is, that we naturally approve as elegant

elegant what is cuſtomary among our ſuperiours. And another, and a better, reaſon is, becauſe the moſt enlightened minds muſt be ſuppoſed to be the beſt judges of propriety in ſpeech, as well as in every other thing that does not affect the conſcience.

The ſtandard of ſpeech being thus aſcertained, provincial dialects are to be conſidered as more or leſs elegant, according as they more or leſs reſemble it. And it has been the wiſh of many, that the ſame modes of language ſhould prevail through the whole empire. But this, however deſirable, is perhaps impoſſible. At leaſt there never yet was any inſtance of it in an extenſive country. The Greeks themſelves, with all their philological accuracy, had different dialects: — the apoſtle Peter, when at Jeruſalem, was known by his ſpeech to be a man of Galilee: —Livy has been accuſed of provincial idioms, though his native city Padua was but two hundred miles from Rome: — in the ſouthern part of this iſland there have long been two diſtinct languages, the Engliſh and Welch; and two others in the north, the Scotch and Erſe, which are different from theſe, as well as from one another: —the dialects of Lancaſhire and Yorkſhire are hardly underſtood in London: — even in Kent, and in Berkſhire, we hear words and ſounds, that are not known in Middleſex: —nay, the ſpeech of the learned Lon-

Londoner and Parifian differs not a little, both in idiom, and in accent, from that of his unlettered fellow-citizens.

As Emphafis gives energy to pronunciation, Accent renders it graceful; and is no doubt of further benefit, in diftinguifhing from one another the feveral tribes of mankind. For in many cafes, it might be inconvenient to miftake a ftranger for a fellow-fubject; or not to have the means of proving a man's identity, or his birth-place, from the tone of his language. By their handwriting, and features, individuals may be diftinguifhed; and the national arrangements of mankind, by their words and accent. And of all the peculiarities of a foreign tongue, accent is the moft difficult for a grown perfon to acquire. No Frenchman, who has not paffed his infancy or childhood in England, will ever fpeak Engliſh with the true accent. Scotch men have lived forty years in London without entirely lofing their native tone. And it may be doubted, whether it is poffible for one, who has lived the firft twenty years of his life in North Britain, ever to acquire all the niceties of Engliſh pronunciation.—The fame thing may be remarked of other languages, and the natives of other countries.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Abſurdity of the Epicurean doctrine of the Origin of language: men muſt have ſpoken in all ages; the firſt man, by inſpiration.— The variety of original tongues, a proof of the Scripture hiſtory of Babel.— All languages have ſome things in common, which it is the buſineſs of Univerſal Grammar to explain.

WE learn to ſpeak, when our organs are moſt flexible, and our powers of imitation moſt active; that is, when we are infants. Yet even then, this is no eaſy acquiſition, but the effect of daily exerciſe continued for ſeveral years from morning to night. Were we never to attempt ſpeech, till we are grown up, there is reaſon to think that we ſhould find it exceedingly difficult, if not impracticable. This appears, not only from what is recorded of mute Savages found in deſerts, who, though ſagacious enough and of no great age, could never be taught to ſpeak diſtinctly; one of whom, anſwering this deſcription, was alive, and in England, a few years ago, and perhaps is alive ſtill: but alſo from a fact more obſervable, namely, that in every language there are certain accents and articulate ſounds, which they only can pronounce with eaſe, who have learned to do ſo

when

when very young. Nay every province almoſt has ſome peculiarities of pronunciation, which the people of the neighbouring provinces find it very difficult to imitate, when grown up, but which, when they were children, they could have learned moſt perfectly in a few months. Infants, who have been taught to ſpeak one language, acquire others with amazing facility. I knew an inſtance of a French child of ſix years old, who, on coming to Britain, forgot his mother tongue, and learned all the Engliſh he had occaſion for, in little more than ſix weeks. A grown man, on the contrary, with all the helps of grammars, dictionaries, authors, maſters, and converſation, ſeldom acquires a foreign tongue ſo as to ſpeak it like a native.

If, then, there ever was a time, when all mankind were, as the Epicureans ſuppoſed, *mutum et turpe pecus*, a dumb and brutal race of animals, all mankind muſt, in the ordinary courſe of things, have continued dumb to this day.—For, firſt, to ſuch animals ſpeech could not be neceſſary; as they are ſuppoſed to have exiſted for ages without it: and it is not to be imagined, that dumb and beaſtly ſavages would ever think of contriving unneceſſary arts, whereof they had no example in the world around them.

Lucretius tells us, that, at ſome early period, nobody knows when, the woods being ſet on fire, either by lightning, or by

trees

trees grated againſt each other in the agitation of a ſtorm, human creatures, who, like the world and all things in it, had been formed of atoms falling together without order, direction, or cauſe, and who had hitherto lived diſperſed and naked, as well as dumb, were ſo enervated by the heat of the conflagration, that they could never after hold out againſt the injuries of the weather:—that, conſtrained to take ſhelter in holes and caverns, males and females, jumbled together by accident, became known to each other, and in time reſolved themſelves into ſmall aſſociations or families:—that from henceforth men knew their own offspring; which formerly they did not; the intercourſe of the ſexes being then fortuitous and temporary, and without friendſhip on either ſide:—that the minds of thoſe rugged ſavages, ſoftened by the blandiſhments of domeſtick life, became in time ſomewhat more rational; and, after a little communication with the neighbouring families, found it neceſſary, for the general ſafety, to inſtitute certain artificial diſtinctions of right and wrong, whereof, till this period, they had never been conſcious. Theſe new notions, however, could not be enforced, nor obtain authority, without promiſes and compact; for the making of which, it was further requiſite to invent certain ſigns of thought, that ſhould have a more definite meaning, than the yells and geſtures that had hitherto given expreſſion

to their feelings. And thus, both ſpeech and moral ſentiments were invented; which, according to this account, were as really the work of human art, as houſes, waggons, ſhips, or any other piece of mechaniſm.

The beauty of Lucretius's poetry made this ſyſtem faſhionable at Rome. Horace adopted it, and has in a few well-known lines * given a ſummary of it; and Virgil, in his youth, (for he afterwards became a Platoniſt) is ſuppoſed to have been tinctured

* Cum prorepſerunt primis animalia terris,
Mutum et turpe pecus, glandem atque cubilia propter,
Unguibus et pugnis, dein fuſtibus, atque ita porro
Pugnabant armis, quæ poſt fabricaverat uſus;
Donec verba, quibus voces ſenſuſque notarent,
Nominaque invenere; dehinç abſiſtere bello, &c.
Lib. i. Sat. 3. v. 97.

The following paraphraſe has nothing of the elegance of Horace or Lucretius; but ſeems to have all the elegance that ſo ridiculous a doctrine deſerves:

When men out of the earth of old
A dumb and beaſtly vermin crawl'd;
For acorns, firſt, and holes of ſhelter,
They, tooth and nail, and helter ſkelter,
Fought fiſt to fiſt; then with a club
Each learn'd his brother brute to drub;
Till, more experienced grown, theſe cattle
Forged fit accoutrements for battle.
At laſt (Lucretius ſays, and Creech)
They ſet their wits to work on *ſpeech*:
And, that their thoughts might all have marks
To make them known, theſe learned clerks
Left off the trade of cracking crowns,
And manufactured verbs and nouns.

with

with it. Nay Tully himſelf *, though no admirer of Epicurean tenets, appears rather partial to this account of the origin of ſpeech, laws, and policy; which, though repugnant to hiſtory, and fraught with abſurdity, ſeveral authors of latter times have endeavoured to revive.

One would wonder, what charms men could find in a ſyſtem ſo degrading to our nature; or what evidence in that which has no other foundation, than poetical fancy and wild hypotheſis. The Pagans, indeed, who knew little of the origin of mankind, might be excuſed for favouring an opinion, which, as it appears in Lucretius, has at leaſt harmonious numbers, and elegant deſcription to recommend it. And yet, unſeduced by poetical allurement, Quintilian declares, in the language of true philoſophy, that moral ſentiments are natural to us, and that men had ſpeech from the beginning, and received that choice gift from their Creator. And Ovid's beautiful account of the firſt men ſeems to have been compoſed, partly from Heſiod's golden age, and partly from traditions founded on the Moſaick hiſtory of the creation.—That we were at firſt good and happy, and loſt our felicity when we loſt our innocence,—is it not an idea more honourable to our nature, more friendly to virtue, and more conſonant to the general notions

* De Inventione, lib. 1. Tuſcul. quæſt. lib. 5.

of mankind, than that we were in the beginning a ſpecies of wild beaſt, and afterwards by improvement degenerated into wicked and wretched men? If there be, in the conſciouſneſs of honourable deſcent, any thing that elevates the ſoul, ſurely thoſe writings cannot be on the ſide of virtue which repreſent our nature, and our origin, as ſuch as we ſhould have reaſon to be aſhamed of. But he, who tells me, upon the authority of Scripture, and agreeably to the dictates of right reaſon, that we are all deſcended from beings, who were created in the image of God, wiſe, innocent, and happy; that, by their and our unworthy conduct, human nature is miſerably degraded; but that, on the performance of certain moſt reaſonable conditions, we may retrieve our primitive dignity, and riſe even to higher happineſs, than that of our firſt parents;—the man, I ſay, who teaches this doctrine, ſets before me the moſt animating motives to virtue, humility, and hope, to piety and benevolence, to gratitude and adoration.

Other abſurdities in this account of the origin of ſociety I may poſſibly touch upon hereafter. At preſent I would only obſerve, that *ſpeech* could not have been invented in the way here deſcribed. For to animals in this ſtate of brutality I have already remarked, that language could not be needful: and it is hardly to be ſuppoſed, that dumb and

beaſtly

beaſtly creatures would apply themſelves to the cultivation of unneceſſary arts, which they had never felt any inconvenience from the want of, and which had never been attempted by other animals. To which I may add, what is clear from ſome of the preceding obſervations, that Speech, if invented at all, muſt have been invented, either by children, who were incapable of invention, or by men, who were incapable of ſpeech. And therefore reaſon, as well as hiſtory, intimates, that mankind in all ages muſt have been ſpeaking animals; the young having conſtantly acquired this art by imitating thoſe who were elder. And we may warrantably ſuppoſe, that our firſt parents muſt have received it by immediate inſpiration.

As the firſt language, whatever it was, muſt therefore have been perfect; and liable to no depravation from a mixture of foreign idioms; and held in reverence by thoſe who ſpoke it, that is, by all mankind, on account of its divine original; we may believe, that it would continue unaltered for many ages. Accordingly Scripture informs us, that when the building of Babel was begun, about eighteen hundred years after the fall, the whole earth was of one ſpeech. And, had no miraculous interpoſition taken place, it is probable, that ſome traces of it would have remained in every language to this day. For, though, in ſo long a time, many words muſt have

been changed, many introduced, and many forgotten, in every country, yet men being all of the ſame family, and all deriving their ſpeech from the only one primitive tongue, it may be preſumed, that ſome of the original words would ſtill have been in uſe throughout the whole earth: even as in all the modern languages of Europe ſome Greek, and ſome Hebrew, and a great deal of Latin, is ſtill diſcernible. But Providence thought fit to prevent this; and, by confounding the language of the builders of Babel, to eſtabliſh in the world a variety of primitive tongues.

This miracle could not fail to be attended with important conſequences. Thoſe men only would remain in the ſame ſociety who underſtood one another: and ſo the human race would be broken into a number of ſmall tribes or nations, each of which would keep together, and conſequently at ſome diſtance from the reſt. A general diſperſion would follow: and in this way it is probable, that the whole world would be ſooner inhabited, than if all the ſpecies had remained united in one great nation. And the diſtinctions of friend and ſtranger, of citizen and foreigner, would now take place: whence rivalſhip would ariſe; than which nothing more effectually promotes induſtry, and the various arts of life.

If it were not for what is recorded of Babel, the very great diverſities of human ſpeech would be a marvellous phenomenon. Languages are either Primitive, or Derived. That thoſe which are formed out of the ſame parent tongue ſhould all reſemble it and one another, and yet ſhould all be different, is not more wonderful, than that children and their parents ſhould be marked with a general family likeneſs, and each diſtinguiſhed by peculiar features. Spaniſh, Italian, Portugueſe, French, and a great deal of the Engliſh tongue, are derived from the Latin; with the addition of many new words, and new modes of termination and ſyntax, which were introduced by the northern nations. And therefore all theſe languages reſemble the Latin and one another; and yet each is different from it, and from all the reſt. But, if we could compare two original or primitive tongues together, the Hebrew, for inſtance, with the Gothick or with the Celtick, or the language of China with that of the Hurons in North America, we ſhould not diſcern, perhaps, the leaſt ſimilitude: which, conſidering that all mankind are of the ſame family, could not be fully accounted for, without ſuppoſing, that ſome preternatural event, like that of the confuſion at Babel, had ſome time or other taken place. But this hiſtory ſolves all difficulties. And we have no more reaſon to be ſurpriſed, that different nations, though related in blood,

ſhould ſpeak languages totally unlike, than that couſins of the twentieth remove, living in different climates, ſome in houſes and ſome in caves, ſome naked and others clothed, ſome burning in the torrid zone, and others freezing in the polar circle, ſhould differ in their features and complexion.

But, as the miracle at Babel introduced no material change into human nature; and as, ever ſince the flood, men have had the ſame faculties, have been placed in the ſame or in like circumſtances, have felt the ſame wants, found comfort in the ſame gratifications, and acted from the influence of the ſame motives; it is reaſonable to infer, that the *thoughts* of men muſt in all ages have been nearly the ſame. In the moſt antient hiſtories we find, that the modes of thinking and acting, of believing and diſbelieving, of approbation and diſapprobation, are perfectly ſimilar to what we experience in ourſelves, and in the world around us. Now, as human thoughts diſcover themſelves by language, and as the thoughts of men in one age and nation are ſimilar to thoſe in another, is it not probable, that there may be in all human languages ſome general points of reſemblance, in ſtructure at leaſt, if not in ſound? Since, for example, all men in all ages muſt have had occaſion to ſpeak of acting, and of being acted upon, of good and of bad qualities, and of the various objects of outward

ſenſe,

ſenſe, muſt there not in every language be verbs, and adjectives, and nouns? What one nation calls * *hippos*, another may call *equus*, a third *cavallo*, a fourth *cheval*, and a fifth *horſe*; that is, different compoſitions of articulate ſound may ſtand for the ſame animal in different nations: but, in every nation, where this animal is known and ſpoken of, there muſt be ſome name for it; and words alſo to expreſs its qualities, as *good*, *bad*, *ſtrong*, *ſwift*, *weak*, *ſlow*, *black*, *white*, *great*, *ſmall*, and its actions, as *running*, *walking*, *eating*, *drinking*, *neighing*, &c.

Languages, therefore, reſemble men in this reſpect, that, though each has peculiarities, whereby it is diſtinguiſhed from every other, yet all have certain qualities in common. The peculiarities of individual tongues are explained in their reſpective grammars and dictionaries. Thoſe things, that all languages have in common, or that are neceſſary to every language, are treated of in a ſcience, which ſome have called *Univerſal* or *Philoſophical Grammar*; whereof I ſhall now endeavour to unfold the principles. The knowledge of it will not only illuſtrate what we may already have learned of the grammatical art; but alſo, by tracing that matter to its firſt elements, will give us more comprehenſive views of it than can be obtained from any particular grammar; and at the

* ἵππος.

ſame time make us better judges of the nature and extent of human language, and of the connection, that obtains between our words and thoughts. Conſidered as reſulting from, and as founded in, the faculties and circumſtances of human beings, the principles of grammar form an important, and very curious, part of the philoſophy of the human mind.

Much new diſcovery is not to be looked for, in an inveſtigation that has been ſeveral times attempted already with good ſucceſs. Yet moſt of thoſe who have gone before me in this enquiry (as far at leaſt as I am acquainted with them) have both profited by the labours of their predeceſſors, and alſo made conſiderable improvements of their own. Whether I ſhall be thought to have done ſo in any degree, I know not. This, however, let me be permitted to ſay, that for many of the following, as well as of the preceding, remarks, I am not indebted to former authors; that in ſome particulars I have ventured to differ, and I hope not without reaſon, from thoſe whom I eſteem, and by whoſe writings I have been inſtructed; and that, though ſeveral of the topicks are not without obſcurity, the whole is delivered in a ſtyle, which, by repeated experience, I know to be intelligible, and not unintereſting, even to very young perſons. Speculations of this nature are not ſo ſoon exhauſted

as

as ſome people may imagine. Every writer and teacher, who has taken pains to form a ſtyle, and to underſtand his ſubject, will be found to have a manner of his own: and as long as readers and hearers differ in their taſtes and powers of comprehenſion, ſo long it may be uſeful, in explaining the ſciences, to vary the modes of illuſtration and argument.

But before I proceed to Univerſal Grammar, it will be proper to make ſome remarks on language rendered viſible by writing.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Art of Writing; its importance, and origin.—Different ſorts of it practiſed by different nations.—A ſhort Hiſtory of Printing.

A WORD is an audible and articulate ſign of thought: a Letter is a viſible ſign of an articulate ſound. The uſe of letters is a wonderful invention; but by no means univerſal. Every man can ſpeak who is not deaf; and men have ſpoken in all ages; but in many nations the art of writing is ſtill unknown.

Words ſpoken make an immediate impreſſion, but depend, for their permanence, upon the memory of the ſpeaker and hearer; and the beſt memory loſes more than it retains: but words written may be preſerved from age to age, and made as durable as any thing human can be.—When we ſpeak, we are underſtood no further than we are heard: but what is written may be ſent round the world, and circulated in all nations.—We can ſpeak no longer than we live: but the thoughts of men, who died three thouſand years ago, are ſtill extant in writing; and, by means of this divine art, will continue to entertain and inſtruct mankind

kind to the end of the world.—Moreover, while we only meditate, our memory is not always ſo faithful as to enable us to reviſe our thoughts, compare them together, and render them conſiſtent: but by writing we make them paſs and repaſs in review before us, till we have made them ſuch as we wiſh them to be.—God has been pleaſed to reveal his will to us in writing; and, without this art, policy, which is the moſt venerable of all *human* inſtitutions, would be exceedingly imperfect.

The importance of writing to the virtue and happineſs of mankind, as well as to the aſcertaining, methodizing, preſerving, and extending of human knowledge, is indeed ſo great, that one is apt to wonder, how any age or country ſhould be ignorant of an art, which may be acquired with ſo little difficulty, and exerciſed with ſo much pleaſure. But, though of eaſy acquiſition to us, it is in itſelf neither eaſy nor obvious. Savages articulate their mother tongue, without troubling themſelves about the analyſis of ſentences, or the ſeparation of words; of reſolving words into the ſimple elementary ſounds they have no idea: how then ſhould they think of expreſſing thoſe ſimple ſounds by viſible and permanent ſymbols! In fact, alphabetical writing muſt be ſo remote from the conception of thoſe who never heard of it, that without divine aid it would ſeem to be unſearch-

ſearchable and impoſſible. No wonder then, that ſome authors ſhould have aſcribed it to Adam, and ſuppoſed it to be the effect of inſpiration.

Of the nature of Antediluvian, or of the firſt, writing, whether it was alphabetical, or by hieroglyphicks, we can only form conjectures. The wiſdom and ſimple manners of the firſt men would incline me to think, that they muſt have had an alphabet, for hieroglyphick characters, imply quaintneſs and witticiſm. That Moſes knew an alphabet, is certain: and we may venture to ſay, he learned it in Egypt, where he was born and educated.

If this be granted, the hieroglyphicks of Egypt and Ethiopia will appear of later date than alphabetical writing; and to have been contrived, as many learned men have thought, by prieſts or politicians, for expreſſing, in a way not intelligible to the vulgar, the myſteries of religion and government.—A hieroglyphick, or *ſacred ſculpture*, is an emblematical figure, which denotes, not an articulate ſound, as a letter does, but an idea, or thing. It is a repreſentation of ſome part of the human body, or of ſome animal, vegetable, or work of art; but it means, not that which it repreſents, but ſomething elſe that is, or is ſuppoſed to be, of a like nature. Thus, the figure of a lamp, among the Egyptian prieſts, ſignified, not a lamp, but life;

life; a circle was the emblem of eternity; and an eye on the top of a ſceptre denoted a ſovereign.

Hieroglyphicks muſt have been a very imperfect mode of expreſſing thought. They took up a great deal of room; could hardly be connected ſo as to form a ſentence; were made ſlowly, and with difficulty; and, when made, were no better than riddles.

Ceſar, in his account of the Druids of Gaul, relates, that they obliged their diſciples to get by heart ſo great a number of verſes, that the term of their education was ſometimes lengthened out to twenty years. And we are told, that they accounted it unlawful to commit thoſe verſes to writing, notwithſtanding that they underſtood the Greek alphabet, and made uſe of it in their ordinary buſineſs both publick and private. "Two things," continues he, "ſeem to "me to have determined them in this: firſt, "that their tenets might not be publiſhed to "the vulgar: and, ſecondly, that having no "books to truſt to, they might be the more "careful to improve their memory, and "more accurate ſtudents of the myſteries of "their order." * — May not the Egyptian hieroglyphicks have been invented for the ſame purpoſes? By the vulgar they could not be underſtood: and their enigmatical

* Cæſar. Bell. Gall. lib. vi. cap. 13.

nature

nature made it neceſſary for the prieſts to ſtudy them, and conſequently the doctrines implied in them, with extraordinary perſeverance and application.

When the Spaniards invaded Mexico in the fifteenth century, the news of their landing was ſent to the emperor Motezuma, not by writing, or by hieroglyphicks (for the Mexicans had neither) but by a rude draught or picture of the ſhips. This is no doubt a natural way of expreſſing things viſible: but I cannot agree in opinion with thoſe authors, who ſuppoſe it to have been the moſt ancient form of *writing*; as it is ſo laborious, ſo liable to be miſunderſtood, expreſſive of ſo few ideas, and in general ſo very inconvenient. The Mexican, who carried the news, was certainly able to give a verbal account of what had happened. If he carried alſo a draught of the ſhips, it muſt have been, as we carry plans, with a view to give a more lively idea than words could convey. European ſhips had never appeared in that part of the world before; and if thoſe people had any ſkill in drawing, it was as natural for them to practiſe it on ſo memorable an occaſion, as it would be for us, if a huge unknown ſea-monſter were to be thrown upon the land.

In Peru and Chili, when we firſt became acquainted with thoſe countries, there was found a curious art, that in ſome meaſure

ſupplied the place of writing. It was called *Quipos*; and conſiſted in certain arrangements of threads, or knots, of different colours; whereby they preſerved, in a way which we cannot explain, inventories of their moveables, and the remembrance of extraordinary events. The knowlege of the Quipos is ſaid to have been a great myſtery, handed down by tradition from fathers to their children, but never divulged by the parent, till he thought his life near an end.—Belts of *wampum* (as it is called) are probably contrivances of a like nature, made of a great number of little beads of different colours artfully, and not inelegantly, interwoven. Theſe belts are uſed by the Indians of North America in their treaties; and are ſaid to expreſs, I know not how, the particulars of the tranſaction.

In China, if we believe what is reported by travellers, the art of writing has been underſtood theſe three or four thouſand years; and yet they have no alphabet to this day *.

* This is the common opinion, and was once mine. But I have been lately informed, by a Scotch gentleman, who reſided long at Batavia, that a Chineſe, on hearing his chriſtian name and ſurname, wrote ſomething upon paper, and that another Chineſe, on ſeeing it, articulated the two words diſtinctly. This could hardly have been done, except by thoſe who underſtood the art of expreſſing by written ſymbols the *elementary ſounds* of language. And yet it is poſſible, that the ſyllables which compoſe the name might be Chineſe words. The gentleman, however, is of opinion, that the trading people of China have a ſort of alphabet.

There is for each word a diſtinct character; and the number of words is ſaid to be fourſcore thouſand: ſo that a Chineſe doctor grows old and dies, before he has learned one half of his letters. The characters are of the nature of hieroglyphicks, but ſo curtailed or contracted for the ſake of expedition, that their primitive ſhape cannot be gueſſed from their preſent form. They divide them into four claſſes: the antient, which are preſerved on account of their antiquity, but never uſed; a ſecond ſpecies appropriated to publick inſcriptions; a third, common enough in printing and even in writing, but too unwieldy for daily uſe; and a fourth, more manageable, for ordinary buſineſs. — It is further ſaîd of the Chineſe tongue, that every word in it is a monoſyllable; and that one and the ſame ſyllable may have ten or a dozen different meanings, according to the tone with which it is pronounced. If this be true, there muſt be more accent in it, than in any other language that has yet been heard of; and we need not wonder, that it is of ſo difficult acquiſition to ſtrangers.

Some of our modern philoſophers affect to be great admirers of the genius, policy, and morality of the Chineſe. The truth is, that Europeans know very little of that remote people; and we are apt to admire what we do not underſtand: and for thoſe who, like the Chineſe, obſtinately ſhut their eyes againſt

againſt the light of the Goſpel, the French authors, now-a-days, and their imitators, are apt to cheriſh an extraordinary warmth of brotherly affection.—But if we conſider, that, though their empire is ſuppoſed to have ſtood for upwards of four thouſand years, the Chineſe are ſtill unſkilled in almoſt every branch of literature; that their moſt learned men have never thought it worth while to invent or adopt an alphabet, though they muſt have heard that there is ſuch a thing in other parts of the world; that their painting, though gaudy, is without perſpective, and looks like a maſs of things, men, trees, houſes, and mountains, heaped on one another's heads; that, when a fire broke out at Canton, whereof Commodore Anſon was an eye-witneſs, they did not know how to extinguiſh it, but held out the images of their gods to it: if we alſo conſider their proneneſs to deceit and theft; their low cunning; their abſurd jealouſy and timidity, which refuſes almoſt all communication with the reſt of the world; their exceſſive admiration of their own wiſdom, and their contempt of other nations, although they muſt be ſenſible, that one European ſhip of war could have nothing to fear from the whole force of their empire:—if, I ſay, we reflect on theſe things, we ſhall be inclined to think, that they are an ignorant and narrow-minded people, dextrous indeed in ſome petty manufactures, but incapable of enterpriſe, and invention, and

averſe to inquiry. The long continuance and ſtrictneſs of their policy, which ſome admire as the effect of profound wiſdom, is to me a proof of their want of ſpirit: thoſe nations being moſt liberal in their conduct to ſtrangers, and withal moſt liable to political commotion, who are moſt eminently diſtinguiſhed for magnanimity and genius.

When we think, how difficult, and how inadequate, the methods hitherto mentioned are, of rendering language viſible and permanent, we muſt be ſtruck with wonder at the uſefulneſs and perfection of the alphabet. By this invention, if it may be ſo called, although every ſound in language has a correſpondent ſymbol, yet the characters are ſo few, and of a form ſo ſimple, that one may learn the uſe of them in a very ſhort time. Nay, with the help of a few additional ſymbols, one alphabet might ſerve for many languages. The Latin, and all the modern tongues derived from it, have the ſame ſyſtem of letters: and if we were accuſtomed to ſee Greek and Hebrew in the Roman character, we ſhould read them as well in that as in their own.—When things are fairly reduced to their firſt principles, it is pleaſing to obſerve, how the underſtanding is enlightened, and how eaſy that becomes in practice, which before ſeemed impoſſible from its multiplicity. Chineſe Doctors have no doubt been told, that by the European methods a

perfect

perfect knowledge of written language might be acquired in half a year; but I ſuppoſe it would be no eaſy matter to make them believe it.

The alphabets of different tongues differ conſiderably in the number, order, and ſhape of the letters; and, as was before obſerved, it is preſumable, that in all the alphabets now extant there are both defects and redundancies. But this, though an inconvenience, is not very material; as the difficulties of pronunciation that reſult from it are eaſily overcome.

The implements of writing have been different at different periods. In very early times, writing was performed by engraving upon ſtone. Such at its firſt appearance was the Decalogue. And in the deſerts that lie between Egypt and Paleſtine, the rocks of certain mountains are ſaid to be covered with antient characters, ſuppoſed by ſome to have been carved by the people of Iſrael, while they ſojourned in that wilderneſs. Afterwards, letters delineated with a coloured liquid upon vegetable ſubſtances, as wood, the bark of trees, the Egyptian papyrus, (whence our word *paper*) were found more convenient on all ordinary occaſions. The Engliſh term *book* is ſuppoſed to be derived from a Saxon word ſignifying a beech-tree; whence it would appear, that wooden manuſcripts were in uſe among our anceſtors; and

every body knows, that, in Latin, the bark of a tree, and a book, are called by the ſame name. Animal ſubſtances, eſpecially the ſkins of ſheep, goats, and calves, which in time came to be manufactured into parchment and vellum, were better ſuited to the purpoſes of writing, on account of their ſmoothneſs, pliableneſs, and durability: they are ſtill uſed in conveyances; and the firſt authentick copy of every Britiſh ſtatute is engroſſed on parchment.

The Romans, while they were compoſing, wrote with the ſharp end of a bodkin or ſtylus upon tables covered with wax, and, when they wanted to correct any thing, eraſed the former impreſſion with the other end, which was flat: whence Horace adviſes the author, who would compoſe what ſhould be worthy of a ſecond reading, to make frequent uſe of the other end of his pen *, that is, to correct much and carefully. When it was finiſhed to their mind, they had it tranſcribed upon paper or parchment, or ſomething of the ſame nature, called by Horace *charta* and *membrana*; which they rolled up, and kept in a box commonly made of cedar wood, or anointed with oyl of cedar, as a ſecurity againſt worms and rottenneſs. This roll of written parchment they termed *volumen*; a word which we have adopted; al-

* Sæpe ſtylum vertas, iterum quæ digna legi ſint Scripturus. Sat. i. 10. 72.

though

though our way of making up our books is very different, and much more convenient.

Pens, ink, and paper, according to the preſent uſe, were firſt known in Europe about ſix hundred years ago: but ſome writers will not allow them to be ſo antient. The learned Dr. Prideaux is of opinion, that the art of making paper of linen or flax is an eaſtern invention, and was introduced into Spain by the Saracens. But obſerve, that the *charta* mentioned by Pliny and other claſſick authors, though, like our paper, uſed both for writing and for binding up goods in parcels *, and alſo compoſed of vegetable ingredients, was however a different preparation: being made of the filmy fibres of the inner bark of the papyrus, laid on a table firſt parallel and then tranſverſe, and glued together by the muddy water of the Nile, or, where that was wanting, by a paſte made of fine flour and common water.

Printing, as well as paper-making, is of high antiquity in China. But the Chineſe printing is very different from ours, and much more imperfect. They carve the characters of every page upon wood; ſo that their printing reſembles our engraving. The firſt European printers proceeded in the ſame manner; but, as they had no intercourſe with

* See Horace. Lib. ii. Epiſt. i. 270, 113. Lib. i. Sat. x. 4.

China, their art was of their own invention. Printing by types, or moveable letters, is a great improvement; for, in this way, with a ſmall proviſion of types, we may print many books different from one another: whereas, to make a book by the former method, there muſt for every page be an engraved block of wood; and the engravings could be of no further uſe, if the ſame book were never reprinted. This muſt have made our firſt efforts in printing very expenſive and ſlow; but, ſlow and expenſive as they were, the diſcovery was important, and made books incomparably more numerous, and conſequently cheaper, than ever they could have been while manuſcripts only were in uſe. For though the carving of the wooden plates would take up more time than the tranſcribing of ſeveral copies, yet when the plates were finiſhed, thouſands of copies might be printed off in a few days.

Little is known of the firſt printers: nor has either the era or the birth-place of this wonderful invention been exactly aſcertained. The general opinion is, that printing with moveable types was firſt practiſed at Mentz about the year one thouſand four hundred and fifty; and that an edition of the Bible of that date was the firſt printed book, Auguſtin *de civitate Dei* the ſecond, and Tully's *offices* the third.

One

One of the firſt printers was Foſt, or Fauſt, or Fauſtus, who is thought by ſome to have been the inventor of moveable types. He did not chooſe to let the world into the ſecret of his art, for fear of leſſening the price of his books. And therefore, when he expoſed a parcel of them to ſale at Paris, he gave out that they were manuſcripts; which he might the more eaſily do, becauſe no body could ſuppoſe they were any thing elſe. And, that they might paſs for ſuch, without ſuſpicion, he had in printing left blank ſpaces for certain capital letters, which he afterwards inſerted with the pen, flouriſhed and illuminated, according to the faſhion of the times. But, when it was obſerved, how exactly one copy correſponded with another, and that there was not the ſmalleſt variation in the ſhape, ſize, or place, even of a ſingle letter, he was thought to have done what no human power could execute, and conſequently to have intercourſe with evil ſpirits; and found himſelf obliged, in order to avoid proſecution and puniſhment, to divulge the myſtery of printing. Hence came the vulgar tale of Doctor Fauſtus; who is ſaid in the ſtory-book to have been a great magician, and to have ſold himſelf to the devil.

On the uſefulneſs of Printing, as the means of multiplying books without end, of promoting the improvement of arts and ſciences, and of diffuſing knowledge through all the

claſſes

claſſes of mankind, I need not enlarge, as the thing is too obvious to require illuſtration. I ſhall only mention one particular, which is abundantly ſtriking. Common bibles are in this country ſold in ſheets to the retailer at fourteen ſhillings a dozen, or fourteen pence apiece; as I was informed by a perſon who dealt in that article to a very great extent. Thus is the price of the beſt book in the world reduced ſo low, that every perſon, however poor, may have one, either bought with his own money, or given him in charity. But, before the invention of printing, it would have been a great matter if every pariſh could have afforded to have a bible; as the expence of writing out ſo large a book would have been at leaſt equal to that of building an ordinary country church.

To us, who are acquainted with both arts, it may ſeem ſtrange, that the Greeks and Romans, who excelled in the engraving of ſeals and medals, ſhould never think of plates or types for printing. But arts may appear obvious after they are known, which are very far from the imagination of thoſe who never heard of them. The affairs of this world are ordered by Providence, who makes human wiſdom ſubſervient to its own good purpoſes. That the magnet attracts iron, was known to the antients; but its power of giving a polary direction to that metal was not found out till the thirteenth century.

Few

Few arts have ſo ſoon become perfect, as this of Printing. In the library of Mariſchal College there is a Latin tranſlation of Appian, printed at Venice in the year fourteen hundred and ſeventy-ſeven, that is, in the twenty-ſeventh year of the art, which, in the nice cut of the letters and neatneſs of the preſs-work, is hardly inferiour to any book of the preſent age. Its only fault, which it has in common with all the printed books of an early date, is the great number of contractions. Theſe were much affected by the firſt printers, in imitation, no doubt, of the manuſcript-writers, to whom they were a conſiderable ſaving both of time and of paper. They are now diſuſed in moſt languages, except the Greek; and it is to be wiſhed perhaps, that they were not uſed at all. In writing for one's own uſe one may employ abbreviations, or the cyphers of ſhort hand, or any other characters that one is acquainted with; though even this is not prudent, except when one is obliged to write with uncommon expedition: but what is to be laid before the publick, or any other ſuperiour, ſhould have all poſſible clearneſs, and ought therefore to be free from contractions, and the like peculiarities.

Before the middle of the ſixteenth century, that is, in leſs than a hundred years after the invention of printing, this art was brought to its higheſt perfection, by the illuſtrious

Robert

Robert and Henry Stephen; who have a claim to our admiration and gratitude, not only as the greateſt of printers, but alſo as the moſt careful editors, and moſt learned men, of modern times. The former publiſhed a *Theſaurus*, or Dictionary, of the Latin, and the latter a *Theſaurus* of the Greek tongue: works of aſtoniſhing accuracy and erudition, and without doubt the greateſt works of their kind in the world. Henry's *Greek poets*, in folio, is to this day ſtudied, and imitated, as a model of typographical excellence. And that edition by Robert, of the Greek Newteſtament, of which a copy is juſt now before me, printed in the year one thouſand five hundred and forty-ſix, and which is commonly called *O mirificam*, (poſſibly from the ſuperlative elegance of the printing, but probably from the two firſt words of the Preface) is not yet ſurpaſſed in reſpect of beauty, nor perhaps equalled. Their ſtyle of printing has been ſucceſsfully imitated by my lamented friends Robert and Andrew Foulis of Glaſgow, who did much for the improvement of their country, and eſtabliſhed a taſte for elegant printing in Scotland; and whoſe folio Homer is one of the fineſt and moſt correct books that ever came from the preſs.

The Theory of Language.

PART II.

Of Universal Grammar.

INTRODUCTION.

THE words of different languages differ greatly in ſound. Nay, in this reſpect, two languages may be ſo unlike, that the moſt perfect knowlege of the one would not enable us to underſtand a ſingle word of the other. If, therefore, all languages have ſome things in common, thoſe things muſt be ſought for, not in the *ſound* of the words, but in their *ſignification* and *uſe*.

Now words are of various characters in regard to ſignification: and if a perſon, ignorant of grammar, were to look into the vocabulary of any language, he would be ſo confounded with their multitude, as to think it impoſſible to reduce them into claſſes. And yet the ſpecies (or ſorts) of words in the moſt comprehenſive tongue are not many: in our own, which is ſufficiently copious, they amount to no more than TEN: and, in the following ſhort ſentence, every one of the

ten

ten may be found once, and ſome of them twice. "I now ſee the good man coming, "but alas! he walks with difficulty."— *I* and *he* are pronouns, *now* is an adverb, *ſee* and *walks* are verbs, *the* is an article, *good* is an adjective, *man* and *difficulty* are nouns, *coming* is a participle, *but* a conjunction, *with* a prepoſition, and *alas* an interjection. One would think a language muſt be very imperfect, that has not a word to anſwer each of thoſe contained in this ſentence.

May we not then infer, that in every language there muſt be nine or ten ſpecies of words; or, to expreſs it otherwiſe, that Articles, Nouns, Pronouns, Adjectives, Verbs, Participles, Adverbs, Prepoſitions, Interjections, and Conjunctions, muſt be in all languages?—This, however, will not appear with full evidence, till we have taken a more particular view of theſe ſeveral ſorts of words; and ſhown each of them to be neceſſary, or how far each of them may be neceſſary, for expreſſing certain modes of human thought, to which, from the circumſtances of mankind in every age and nation, we have reaſon to think that all men would find it expedient to give utterance. Thus ſhall we unfold the principles of Univerſal Grammar, by tracing out thoſe powers, forms, or contrivances, which, being eſſential to language, muſt be found in every ſyſtem of human ſpeech that deſerves the name.

CHAP. I.

OF NOUNS.

SECT. I.

Of Nouns Primary, or Substantives.—Of Number, and Gender: which (taking these words in the Grammatical sense) depend, partly upon the nature of things, and partly upon custom and arbitrary rule.

THAT *nouns*, or the *names* of things, must make part of every language, will not be disputed. Men could not speak of one another, or of any thing else, without Substantives. Man, house, stone, mountain, earth, water, meat, drink, &c. must surely be spoken of in every nation.

A Substantive, or Noun, is a word denoting a substance; or, more properly, is "a word denoting the thing spoken of." Now the things we speak of either have a real existence, as man, tree, house, hatchet; or have had a real existence, as Babylon, Eden, Cesar; or are spoken of as if they had existed, or did exist, as Jupiter, Fairy, Lilliput; or are conceived by the mind as having at least the capacity of being characterised

by qualities, as virtue, beauty, motion, ſwiftneſs.—Theſe laſt are called Abſtract Nouns; and the underſtanding forms them, by abſtracting, or ſeparating, from any natural or artificial ſubſtance, either real, or imaginary, certain qualities, and making thoſe qualities the ſubject of meditation or diſcourſe: as—the eagle *flies*—its *flight* is ſwift:—the houſe *ſhakes*; its *ſhaking* is terrible:—Voltaire was *witty*; his *wit* was indecent:—Minerva and Venus were *beautiful*; but the *beauty* of the former was majeſtick, and the *beauty* of the latter alluring.

That the formation of abſtract nouns is natural to man, in every condition wherein he can be placed, will appear, if we conſider, that it is for their *qualities* that things are valued and attended to; and that, therefore, we muſt often compare qualities with one another, and conſequently ſpeak of them as being deſirable, valuable, pleaſant, great, ſmall, good, evil, indifferent, &c. In this manner a quality is ſpoken of as ſome *thing*, that is itſelf characteriſed by qualities; which comes ſo near the deſcription of a ſubſtance, that language gives it a name of the ſubſtantive form.—Perhaps, however, it might be doubted, whether abſtract ſubſtantives be eſſential to language. Thouſands of them indeed there are in all the tongues we are acquainted with: but in many caſes their place might be ſupplied by other words; though

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I confeſs, that this would often give riſe to awkward circumlocutions.

The qualities, aſcribed to abſtract nouns or ideas, may themſelves be abſtracted, and become the things ſpoken of, and ſo be characteriſed by other qualities. Thus from *beautiful animal*, *moving animal*, *cruel animal*, let the qualities be ſeparated, and aſſume the ſubſtantive form, and they become *beauty*, *motion*, *cruelty*; which, as if they were real things, may be characteriſed by qualities, *great* beauty, *ſwift* motion, *barbarous* cruelty. Theſe qualities alſo may be abſtracted, and tranſformed into *greatneſs*, *ſwiftneſs*, *barbarity*; which may have new qualities aſſigned them equally ſuſceptible of abſtraction, *tranſitory* greatneſs, *inconceivable* ſwiftneſs, *brutal* barbarity.

In ſpeaking of ſubſtances, or things, natural, artificial, imaginary, or abſtract, all men will have occaſion to mention, ſometimes one of a kind, and ſometimes more than one: *a man* is coming, or *men* are coming: I ſee a *ſhip*, or I ſee *ſhips*: he thought he ſaw a *ghoſt*, or he dreamed he was ſurrounded with *ghoſts*: Auguſtus had many *virtues*, Nero had not *one virtue*. In every language, therefore, nouns muſt admit of ſome variety in their form, to denote *unity* and *plurality*. If the word *man*, for example, had no plural, it could not be known, when one ſaid, I ſee the man coming, whether

one or more than one was meant. The inconvenience ariſing from this ambiguity would ſoon ſhow the neceſſity of removing it, either by altering the termination, or the middle or initial letters of the word, or by ſome other contrivance.

But this is not equally neceſſary in all caſes. The word which denotes one individual ſubſtance and no other, and which Grammarians call a *proper name*, can never denote more than that one, and therefore cannot have plurality. *Epaminondas* can never be plural, ſo long as we know of no more than one of that name. In like manner, *Weſtminſter abbey* denotes one particular building, *Rome* one particular city, *Etna* one particular mountain, and the *Thames* one particular river.

When theſe, and the like words, aſſume a plural, they then ceaſe to be *proper* names, and ſignify a claſs or ſpecies of things, or perhaps ſupply the place of general appellatives. When I ſay, *the twelve Ceſars*, I uſe the noun, not as the proper name of an individual, but as a common appellative belonging to twelve perſons, to each of whom it is equally applicable. When I ſay, that *twenty Thameſes* united would not form a river ſo large as the Ganges, I uſe the word *Thames* to denote in general a river, or a quantity of running water, as large as the Thames. We ſpeak of the Gordons, the Macdonalds,

the

the Howards, &c.; in all which cases, it is plain, that the noun, which bears the plural termination, is not the distinguishing name of one man, but a general name common to every individual of a tribe or family.

Further: When any individual person has rendered himself famous in a particular way, his name is sometimes given to such as are famous in the same way; and then, it becomes, in like manner, a common appellative, and admits of plurality. Mecenas was a great patron of learning, and Virgil an excellent poet whom he patronised: and Martial has said, that "Virgils will not be want-
" ing where there are Mecenases." Who does not see, that the meaning is, "Good
" authors will not be wanting, where there
" are great patrons?"

We are told, in our Grammars, that proper names for the most part want the plural. But the truth is, that proper names *always* want it: for when a name, that is commonly applied to one individual, assumes a plural form, it ceases to be a proper name. And as every such name *may* assume such a form, the Latin Grammarians, as well as the Greek, might have given examples of proper names with plural terminations. For *Cæsares, Cæsarum, Cæsaribus*, are as agreeable to Latin analogy, as * *Aineiai, Aineiôn, Aineiais* are

* Αινειαι, Αινειων, Αινειαις.

to Greek.—It will occur perhaps, that ſome proper names are always plural, and have no ſingular, as *Athenæ*, *Mycenæ*, *Thebæ*, *the Deviſes*, &c. But this is merely accidental; and reſults not from the nature of the thing, but from the cuſtom of a particular language; and is therefore a conſideration that belongs not to Univerſal Grammar.

Every name in language, that denotes a *genus* or a *ſpecies*, may be applied either to one, or to many individuals of a *kind* or *ſort* *, and

* When a number of things are found to reſemble each other in ſome important particulars, we refer them to one claſs, ſpecies, or tribe, to which we give a name; and this name belongs equally to each individual comprehended in that claſs or ſpecies. Thus, the word *man*, *homo*, denotes a claſs of animals, and is equally applicable to every human being.——Again, finding ſeveral ſpecies or claſſes to reſemble each other in certain common qualities, we refer them to a higher claſs called a *genus*, to which we give a name, that is equally applicable to every ſpecies and every individual comprehended under it. Thus all living things on earth reſemble each other in this reſpect, that they have life. We refer them, therefore, to the genus called *Animal*; and this word belongs to every ſpecies of animals, and to each individual animal.—Moreover, all things, animated and inanimate, agree in this, that they are created; and in this view we refer them to a claſs ſtill higher, called *Creature*; a word which belongs equally to every genus and ſpecies of created things, and to each individual thing that is created.—Further ſtill, All beings whatever reſemble one another in this reſpect, that they *are* or *exiſt*; whence we refer them to a claſs ſtill higher, and indeed the higheſt of all, called *Being*.—This gradation is ſeen at one glance in the following words; *Socrates*, *Man*, *Animal*, *Creature*, *Being*.

That

and muſt by conſequence be capable of expreſſing plurality, as well as unity. *Homo*, therefore, and *man*, muſt admit of ſome ſuch variety as *homines* and *men*; becauſe the word may be uſed of one perſon, or of any number of perſons, of the human ſpecies. And this diſtinction of Singular and Plural would ſeem to be eſſential to the nouns of every language: at leaſt we may venture to affirm, that it could not be wanting without great inconvenience. There are, indeed, in many tongues, and perhaps in all, ſome nouns that have no plural form, and others that have no ſingular, even when there is nothing in their ſignification to hinder it: but this, like the plural proper names, is accidental, and might have been otherwiſe, if cuſtom and popular uſe had ſo determined.

In the Attick dialect, and poetical language, of the Greeks, there is alſo a *dual* number to expreſs *two*. But this is not neceſſary; though ſeveral other ancient tongues

That claſs is called a *Species*, which comprehends under it, or is underſtood to comprehend, individuals; and that a *Genus*, which comprehends a number of ſpecies.

Antiently the Engliſh noun *Kind* was the ſame with *Genus*, and *Sort* with *Species*: but *kind* and *ſort* have long been confounded by our beſt writers; and we are obliged to borrow the words *genus* and *ſpecies* from the Latin:—though, indeed, in good Latin authors, *Species* never has that meaning which we here give it; and which in the language of Cicero would be expreſſed thus, *pars quæ ſubjecta eſt generi*, the claſs, or diviſion, that is ſubordinate to the genus.

have it, particularly the Hebrew, the Gothick, and the Celtick. For, languages being formed in ſome meaſure by accident, it is no wonder that there ſhould be redundancies in them, as well as defects.—It has been ſaid, that *ambo* in Latin, and *both* in Engliſh, are duals. But it is hardly worth while to introduce a new term into any grammar, for the ſake of one example. Beſides, there is this difference between the words in queſtion and Greek dual nouns, that the latter are joined in ſyntax to verbs, adjectives and participles of the dual number; whereas *ambo* takes a plural verb, adjective and participle, and *both* takes a plural verb.

Another thing eſſential to nouns is *gender*. For language would be very imperfect, if it had no expreſſion for the *ſex* of animals. Now all things whatever are Male, or Female, or Both, or Neither.

The exiſtence of hermaphrodites being uncommon, and even doubtful, and language being framed to anſwer the ordinary occaſions of life, no proviſion is made, in any of the tongues we are acquainted with, for expreſſing, otherwiſe than by a name made on purpoſe, or by a periphraſis, Duplicity of ſex. The genders therefore are only two, the *maſculine* and the *feminine*: for what we call the *neuter* gender implies properly a negation of ſex, or that the thing

which

which is ſaid to be of this gender is *neither* male nor female.

In Hebrew, there is no neuter; every noun being either maſculine or feminine: and when things without ſex are expreſſed by pronouns, or alluded to by adjectives, they are more frequently feminine than maſculine.*

All animals have ſex; and therefore the names of all animals muſt have gender. But the ſex of all is not equally obvious, nor equally worthy of attention. In thoſe ſpecies that are moſt common, or whoſe outward appearance and circumſtances are particularly attended to, the male is ſometimes called by one name which is maſculine, and

* More particularly: The demonſtrative pronoun uſed for *this thing* (anſwering to τϐτο *hoc)* when no ſubſtantive is expreſſed, is feminine. Thus, in the Septuagint, and in Matt. xxi. 42. Παρα κυριϐ εγενετο αὐτη και ϵſι θαυμαϛη: literally, A Domino *facta* eſt *hæc*, et eſt *miranda*.—Alſo when an adjective is uſed indefinitely without a noun, the gender in Hebrew is commonly feminine. Thus in Pſal. xii. 4. "A tongue "ſpeaking *great things*;" and Pſal. xxvii. 4. "*One thing* "I deſired;" the adjectives anſwering to *great* and *one*, are feminine: Lingua loquens *magnas: Unam* petivi.

Something like this idiom is obſervable in the vulgar dialects of North Britain; at leaſt when things of eminence are ſpoken of. A Kincardineſhire man ſays, of the river, that *ſhe* is deep; of the watermill, that the froſt will not permit *her* to go, &c. But things of leſs conſideration, as a knife, a chair, &c. are neuter; and the ſun is invariably maſculine, and the moon feminine.

the female by a different name which is feminine. Thus in Engliſh we ſay man, woman; huſband, wife; king, queen; lord, lady; father, mother; ſon, daughter; nephew, niece; uncle, aunt; boy, girl; horſe, mare; cock, hen; boar, ſow, &c. In others of ſimilar diſtinction, the name of the male is altered only in the termination when applied to the female: as emperor, empreſs, antiently empereſs; patron, patroneſs; ſhepherd, ſhepherdeſs; widower, widow; maſter, miſtreſs, antiently maſtereſs, and ſtill pronounced ſo by the vulgar in ſome parts of Scotland. Sometimes we apply the ſame name to either ſex, only prefixing or ſubjoining a particle to denote the gender; as he-aſs, ſhe-aſs; cock-ſparrow, hen-ſparrow; peacock, peahen; moor-cock, moor-hen.

When the ſex of any animal is not obvious, or not material to be known, the ſame name, in ſome languages, is applied without variation to all the ſpecies, and that name is ſaid to be of the *common gender*, and aſſumes in concord either a maſculine or a feminine adjective, participle, or pronoun, according as the one ſex or the other is intended to be ſpecified; as, in Latin *Bos albus* a white ox, *Bos alba* a white cow: but if no account is made of the ſex, and only the ſpecies of animal ſignified, the gender of the name is frequently determined by its final letters *.

Beings

* In Greek, when women are mentioned merely as perſons, and without any regard to ſex, they are ſometimes

Beings ſuperiour to man, though we conceive them to be of no ſex, are ſpoken of as maſculine in moſt of the modern tongues of Europe, on account of their dignity; the male being, according to our ideas, the nobler ſex. But idolatrous nations acknowlege both male and female deities; and ſome of them have given even to the Supreme Being a name of the feminine gender.

When we perſonify the virtues, we ſpeak of them as if they were females; perhaps on account of their lovelineſs; or rather in compliance with the analogy of the Greek and Latin tongues. Thus we call Juſtice the queen of the virtues, not the king: and we ſay, that if Virtue were to take a viſible form, all the world would be enamoured (not of his, but) of her charms.

The antients made females of the Furies; thoſe dreadful beings, who were ſuppoſed to haunt the guilty in this world, and torment them in hell. This might be owing to the accidental termination of their name, or to ſome poetical fable concerning their origin: or perhaps it was thought, that, as nothing is

times in ſyntax connected with pronouns, articles, and participles, of the maſculine gender. Of this the learned Dr. Clarke gives a variety of examples in his notes on Hom. Iliad. lib. v. verſ. 778. Traces of the ſame idiom are to be ſeen in Latin authors. Thus in Plautus we read, *Quis ea* eſt? *Quis ea* eſt mulier? And thus, in Virgil, Eneas, ſpeaking of his mother Venus, ſays, Deſcendo, ac ducente *Deo*. Æneid. ii. 632.

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ſo amiable as a beautiful and virtuous woman, ſo nothing is more hideous than extreme uglineſs and rage united in the female form.

Some authors have ſuppoſed, that it is natural for the human mind to conſider as maſculine the names of ſuch things as are eminent in power; and to make thoſe feminine which denote what is peculiarly fitted for receiving, containing, or bringing forth. But though many plauſible things may be ſaid for this theory, it is alſo liable to many objections.

What in this world is more powerful than Death, which no animal can reſiſt; or than the Sun, which is, as it were, the parent of life, both to animal, and to vegetable nature? Yet, though *Thanatos* is maſculine in Greek, and though Mr. Harris ſeems to think, that the notion of a female Death would be ridiculous, *mors* in Latin, *mort* in French, *morte* in Italian, and *muérte* in Spaniſh, are all feminine *: and, though the moon is feminine, and the ſun maſculine, in many languages, yet, in the Saxon and

*. One of our moſt correct poets ſcruples not to make Death a female in the following paſſage:

Lo, in the vale of years beneath,
A grieſly troop are ſeen,
The painful family of *Death*,
More hideous than their *queen*.
Gray's Ode on Eton College.

ſome

ſome other northern tongues, the ſun is feminine, and the moon maſculine.

If it is merely becauſe the *earth* is the common mother of all terreſtrial productions, that her name is feminine, it will be difficult to aſſign a ſufficient reaſon, why the *ſea* ſhould not alſo be feminine; ſince it is probable, that as many animals and vegetables may be produced in the ſea, as on the land. Its deep voice and boiſterous nature entitle it (according to Mr. Harris) to a maſculine name: but in Virgil, the fury Alecto, who was a female, and ſufficiently turbulent, utters a more terrifick yell than ever proceeded from the moſt tempeſtuous ocean †. Catullus and Ovid mention the ſea as a female, by the name *Amphitrite* ‡. And the common people of Scotland, when expreſſing the ſea by a pronoun, often call it *She*, but I think never *He*: "Let us go and "look at the ſea; they ſay *ſhe* is very rough "to-day."

† Virg. Æneid. vii. 514.—The common Greek name for the ſea is feminine. Ωκεανος and Θαλασσα are not ſynonymous; at leaſt they did not appear ſo to Homer; who uſes the former to ſignify the Great Deep, Ocean, or Source of waters; from which *every ſea*, (πᾶσα θαλασσα) fountain, and river, takes its riſe.

——βαθυῤῥείταο μέγα σθένος Ωκεανοῖο,
Ἐξ ὅπερ πάντες ποταμοὶ, καὶ πᾶσα θάλαττα,
Καὶ πᾶσαι κρῆναι, καὶ φρείατα μακρὰ νάουσιν.
Iliad. xxi. 195.

‡ Catull. de nupt. Pel. et Thet. verſ. 11. Ovid. Metamorph. i. 14.

It ſeems to us quite natural, that a ſhip ſhould be feminine; becauſe, as the learned author of *Hermes* obſerves, it is ſo eminently a receiver and container of various things, of men, arms, proviſions, and goods. Accordingly *naus* in Greek and *navis* in Latin are feminine; and Engliſh ſailors, ſpeaking of their veſſel, ſay, *She* is under ſail: nay, thoſe very perſons who call a war-ſhip a *man of war*, do ſtill adhere to the ſame idiom, and ſay, The man of war ſent out *her* boats. And yet, the French word for *ſhip*, *navire*, though derived from the Latin, is maſculine.

It were vain to attempt to reduce theſe peculiarities to general principles. Real animals, when ſpoken of with a view to their ſex, will no doubt in every country have names of that gender which befits their nature. But allegories are fantaſtick things; and genders, that have no better foundation, cannot be expected to be uniform in different countries. And thoſe imaginary beings, who are idolized by ignorant nations, may to a capricious fancy appear in ſuch a variety of lights, that it ſhall be impoſſible for a ſtranger, from what he may know of their ſuppoſed attributes, to determine any thing *a priori* concerning the gender, which cuſtom may in any particular country annex to their names. We have heard both of a god and of a goddeſs of war: and who will ſay, that Bel-

Iona is not as proper a name as Mars, for that imaginary demon? The god of ſtrength, one would think, muſt be male; and this may be given as one reaſon for the gender of Hercules. And yet Neceſſity, who muſt be ſtronger than Hercules, and all the heathen gods put together, is repreſented by Horace as a female perſonage *; for no other reaſon, that I can gueſs, but becauſe her name in Latin happens to have a feminine termination. It is natural, one may ſay, that the power who is ſuppoſed to preſide over love ſhould be beautiful and feminine: and yet the Romans aſcribed this paſſion as much to the influence of a wicked little Boy, whom Virgil calls *Amor* and *Cupido*, as to that of his mother Venus. The charioteer of the ſun was Phebus, according to the claſſicks: but a Saxon poet would undoubtedly have preferred a female to that high office.

As things which have not animal life cannot with propriety be ſaid to have ſex, (for the ſexual arrangement of vegetables is a modern diſcovery, hinted at indeed by Ariſtotle †, but unknown to the authors of language) it would ſeem moſt natural, that the names of all inanimate things and abſtract ideas ſhould be of the *neuter* gender; that is, ſhould imply, that the things they ſtand for

* Hor. Od. i. 35. verſ. 17.
† De Generat. Animal. lib. i. cap. 1.

are

are of *neither* ſex. And in ſome languages this is no doubt the caſe. But in Greek and Latin, Italian, French, and Spaniſh, many nouns denoting abſtract ideas, and things without life, are maſculine, and many are feminine. The only good reaſon to be given for this is, that certain words are conſidered as of certain genders, on account of their final letters; becauſe accident and cuſtom have ſo determined. But, if it be aſked, why in Latin (for example) the termination *a* of the firſt declenſion ſhould be feminine, and of the third neuter; or why in either it ſhould be feminine or neuter, and not maſculine; I know of no reaſon, but what has been already aſſigned, namely, that in the Latin tongue ſuch is the rule, as eſtabliſhed by cuſtom:—by Cuſtom, I ſay, which in all human affairs has great authority, but which in giving laws to language is abſolute and irreſiſtable *.—It may be ſaid, indeed, that, while a people and their language are in a rude ſtate, and before men think of making grammars, it may be natural to ſay *bonæ pennæ* (for inſtance), and *bonam pennam*, on account of the ſimilar ſound. There may be ſomething in this. But it goes not far in accounting for the fact I ſpeak of. For, to be according to rule, the termination of the adjective and participle muſt *often differ* from that of the correſponding noun: *ſplendidum diadema, plurimus ignis, pii vates, res tranquillæ*, being as much

* See Horat. Art. Poet. verſ. 71, 72.

accord-

according to rule, as *ingenium bonum*, *viro bono*, *antennarum velatarum*.

In Engliſh, *moſt* names of things without ſex *are*, and all of them *may be*, neuter. We may ſay, ſpeaking of the ſun, either that *he* was, or that *it* was, eclipſed; and, of a ſhip, that *it* was wrecked, or that *ſhe* was. But, in all the other languages I know, the gender of moſt ſubſtantives is fixed. And, even in Engliſh, when ſpeaking of things inanimate, or of things without ſex, we cannot make that maſculine, which cuſtom has made feminine, nor that feminine which cuſtom has made maſculine, though we may make either one or the other neuter. Of the ſun I may ſay, *he* is ſet, or *it* is ſet, but I cannot ſay, *ſhe* is ſet; and of the moon, that *ſhe* is changed, or that *it* is changed, but not that *he* is changed. In like manner, ſpeaking of the human ſoul, I may ſay, that *it* does not think always, or that *ſhe* does not think always, but I cannot ſay, that *he* does not think always.

In ſtrict propriety of ſpeech, all Engliſh nouns, denoting what is without life, ought to be neuter: and when we make them maſculine or feminine, it muſt be underſtood to be by the figure called Perſonification. And it is no doubt an advantage in our tongue, and (as a very learned * author remarks)

* Harris's Hermes.

ſerves

ſerves to diſtinguiſh our logical or philoſophical ſtyle from the poetical or rhetorical, that we may always ſpeak of what is without life, either as a *thing*, in the neuter, or, as a *perſon*, in the maſculine or feminine, as beſt ſuits our purpoſe. For this cannot be done ſo eaſily in other languages; at leaſt it cannot be done, ſo as to mark the figure, or the want of it, by a variation of the gender. In Latin, Greek, and French, for example, *virtue* is always feminine: but, in Engliſh, we may, as we pleaſe, make it either feminine or neuter; and ſay, with equal propriety, Virtue ſhall receive *her* reward, (where we ſpeak of Virtue poetically, or rhetorically, as a perſon), or, Virtue ſhall receive *its* reward, where we ſpeak of it with more philoſophical exactneſs.

In old Engliſh authors, I find *his* ſometimes uſed, where we now uſe *its*. Thus, in Leviticus, we read of "the brazen altar, and "*his* grate of braſs, *his* ſtaves, and all *his* "veſſels." Hence I was once led to think, that this ſort of ſubſtantives, though neuter in modern Engliſh, were ſometimes in our antient language maſculine. But it was a miſtake. For in the firſt chapter of Geneſis we have the following words; and ſimilar phraſes there are in other parts of Scripture. "Let the earth bring forth graſs, the herb "yielding ſeed, and the fruit-tree yielding "fruit, after *his* kind whoſe ſeed is in *it-*"*ſelf*."

"*ſelf*."* Now, if the noun *fruit-tree* had been conſidered as maſculine by our tranſlators, the ſentence would have run thus:—"the fruit-tree yielding fruit after *his* kind, "whoſe ſeed is in *himſelf*." But as they apply to one and the ſame ſubſtantive, firſt the pronoun *his*, and then the pronoun *itſelf*, I infer, not that the ſubſtantive was then both maſculine and neuter, but, that the pronoun *his* was then uſed as a poſſeſſive, in ſpeaking of neuter ſubſtantives, though it is now invariably applied to ſuch as are maſculine. †

From

* So in the third part of the Church's homily *againſt peril of Idolatrie*, "What can an image, which when *it* is "fallen cannot riſe again, which can neither help *his* "friends, nor hurt *his* enemies, expreſs of the moſt mighty "God!"

† Dr. Campbell has fully explained this matter, by obſerving, with his uſual accuracy, that the word *its* is not to be found in our Bible: whence we may infer, that, in the old language, it was not uſed, at leaſt in ſolemn ſtyle. See *The Philoſophy of Rhetorick*, vol. ii. p. 394. Inſtead of that word, we have always, in the common Tranſlation, either *his* (as in the paſſages quoted) or a periphraſis, as *the path thereof*, for *its path*. *Itſelf*, indeed, occurs: but, in the old editions, is printed *it ſelf*, in two words, and, therefore, is to be conſidered as compounded, not of *its* and *ſelf*, but of *it* and *ſelf*. And this is the real origin of that reciprocal pronoun. *Self* in old Engliſh means *ſame*. So Shakſpeare,

Shoot another arrow that *ſelf* way
Which you did ſhoot the firſt. *Merchant of Venice.*

From theſe remarks it will appear, how far the genders of nouns are fixed by the nature of things, and how far they depend on cuſtom.—And ſo much for *Subſtantives*, or *Nouns*; a ſort of words, that muſt of neceſſity be in all languages whatſoever.

And ſo Dryden; who, like Homer, Ennius, Virgil, and other great poets, often affects the antique,

At that *ſelf* moment enters Palamon.

Knight's Tale.

Himſelf, therefore, *itſelf*, *myſelf*, *thyſelf*, &c. did probably denote, according to etymology, *the ſame him*, *the ſame it*, *the ſame me*, *the ſame thee*, &c.

SECT. II.

The nature and uſe of Nouns Secondary, or Pronouns.

THE words now to be conſidered do not form a numerous claſs; nor are they, perhaps, ſo eſſential to human ſpeech as the former: but they are ſo convenient, that we have no reaſon to think there is any language without them. They are called by the Greeks * *Antônumiai*, and by the Latins *Pronomina*. And the name well expreſſes their nature; they being put † *anti tou onomatos*, *pro nomine*, inſtead of the noun or name. Their uſe, and the occaſion of introducing them into language, may be thus illuſtrated.

Suppoſe me to meet with a perſon, whoſe name I know not, and to whom I am equally unknown; and that we find it neceſſary to talk together. I want to give ſome information concerning myſelf, and to addreſs that information to him. But how is this to be done? He knows not my name, and I know not his. I might point to myſelf, when I meant to ſpeak of myſelf, and to him when I would ſpeak of him; but this would be inconvenient in the dark, and awkward in any

* Αντωνυμιαι. † ἀντι τȣ ονοματος.

circumſtances. Shall I begin with informing him of my name, and myſelf of his; and afterwards repeat my own name when I ſpeak of myſelf, and his when I ſpeak of him? Perhaps he might not chooſe to tell me his name, and I might be equally ſhy in regard to mine. But ſuppoſe this difficulty got over, and that I want to aſk him the road. If I confine myſelf to proper and ſubſtantive names, I ſay, "James begs as a favour of "Alexander, that Alexander would inform "James, which is the road to ſuch a place:" and, all the while, I muſt be pointing to myſelf and to him alternately, to ſignify, that I was ſpeaking of him and of myſelf, and not of any other perſons of the ſame names. If in ſo ſhort and ſimple an addreſs there is ſo much difficulty, it may well be imagined, that in a continued dialogue there would be a great deal more*.

Now for removing theſe difficulties there is a method very eaſy, and, I think, obvious enough to any rational being. Inſtead of the two proper names, ſubſtitute two pronouns, *I* and *You*; and there is no need either of knowing one another's names, or of pointing.

* Many queſtions might indeed be put, without either the knowledge of names, or the uſe of pronouns. In the caſe ſuppoſed, I might be well enough underſtood by aſking ſimply, Which is the road? But ſpeakers in ordinary converſation continually refer to, and addreſs, one another; and if they had no words to mark ſuch reference, the whole would be ambiguity and confuſion.

"*I* beg

" *I* beg as a favour of *You*, that *you* would " tell *me*, which is the road." Here, then, we ſee in part the origin, the nature, and the uſe, of Pronouns. They are the ſubſtitutes of proper names. This is the firſt and ſimpleſt idea of them; but it is not a complete one.

Further: Suppoſe two perſons to be talking of a third perſon, whoſe name they either know not, or do not care to be continually repeating: it is evident, that the eaſieſt way of managing ſuch a converſation would be to adopt a pronoun, ſuch as *he* and *him*. " I did not ſee Alexander to-day, but Alex- " ander ſent word, that Alexander would do " Alexander the favour to call at my houſe " in the evening:"—is not this more complex, and leſs intelligible, than if I were to ſay, " I did not ſee Alexander to-day, but " *he* ſent word, that *he* would do *himſelf* the " favour to call at my houſe?"

Theſe three Pronouns, *I*, *Thou*, and *He*, are called in our grammars the pronouns of the *firſt*, *ſecond*, and *third perſon*. For it is ſaid, that the ſpeaker, who denotes himſelf by the pronoun *I*, is the chief perſon with regard to his own diſcourſe. It ſhould rather be ſaid, that he is the perſon, whom we firſt attend to; for we naturally turn our eyes, and incline our ears, to the perſon who ſpeaks. He who is ſpoken to, and whom the ſpeaker addreſſes, by the pronoun *thou* or

you, is the next who draws our attention. And the perſon or thing ſpoken of, expreſſed by *he* or *it*, is, in contradiſtinction to the other two, called the *third* perſon.

That the uſe of pronouns may be conſidered as poſteriour in time to that of nouns, and a kind of refinement upon it, appears from a fact, which every body muſt have obſerved, that when a child begins to ſpeak, and knows his own name, he is apt to uſe it in ſpeaking of himſelf; and it requires ſome pains, or ſome practice at leaſt, to teach him how to ſupply its place by the pronouns of the firſt perſon *I*, and *Me*.

If it be aſked, whether pronouns, like the nouns they repreſent, muſt admit the diſtinction of unity and plurality, the anſwer is obviouſly, yes. For one or more perſons may ſpeak, or one may ſpeak the ſentiment of many; and to one or to more perſons our ſpeech may be addreſſed; and the perſons or things ſpoken of may be either one or many. And therefore *I* muſt have a plural *we*; *thou* muſt have *ye* or *you*; and *he* or *it* muſt have *they*. And the ſame analogy muſt take place in all languages.

The Greeks and Romans, in addreſſing one perſon, uſed the ſingular of the pronoun, *thou*; whereas we, and many other modern nations, uſe the plural *you*. But in very ſolemn ſtyle, as when we invoke the

Supreme

Supreme Being, we uſe *Thou:* and, what is remarkable, we ſometimes uſe the ſame form of the pronoun in contemptuous or very familiar language. This laſt mode of ſpeech the French, who have it as well as we, expreſs by the verb *tutoyer*; and Shakeſpeare makes *thou* a verb of the ſame import: "If "thou *thoueſt* him three or four times it will "not be amiſs:" that is, if thou addreſſeſt him by the contemptuous or familiar appellation of *Thou*.—The people called Quakers profeſs, in imitation of the ſcripture ſtyle, to uſe *thou* on all occaſions, when ſpeaking to one perſon; but many of them ungrammatically put the oblique caſe *thee* in its place.

In the Latin tongue, it is a rule, when the pronouns of the firſt and ſecond perſon are joined by the copulative, to give precedency to the former, and ſay, *Ego et Tu*; but we uſe a contrary arrangement, *You and I*; for it would look like arrogance if one were to ſay in Engliſh, *I and You*. One Engliſh author, indeed, has, in a certain controverſial treatiſe, ſaid, not only, "I and Doctor ſuch-"a-one," (naming his opponent), but alſo, "I and the Publick:" but it is a ſingularity, in which I believe he will not be imitated. Cardinal Wolſey was blamed for writing in one of his letters, *Ego et Rex meus*, I and my king; for this, though agreeable to the idiom of the language in which he wrote, is ſo repugnant to our manners, that it was thought

nothing but the moſt extravagant vanity could have induced him to adopt it.

It is difficult to preſcribe laws to ceremony. A Spaniard, out of reſpect, walks before you out of his houſe; to intimate, that he has ſuch confidence in you, that he could leave it in your poſſeſſion: we, out of reſpect, make our friend walk out of our houſe before us; to intimate, that we account him the better man. The cuſtoms are contrary, though they proceed from the ſame principle.

A King, exerting his authority on a ſolemn occaſion, adopts the plural of the firſt perſon, "*We* ſtrictly command and charge:" meaning, that he acts by the advice of counſellors, or rather, that he is the repreſentative of a whole people. The ſame form of ſpeech was frequent in the mouth of an old Roman, though a private man: and, in alluſion to the Claſſick idiom, Engliſh authors do ſometimes, in ſpeaking of themſelves, ſay *We* and *Us*, inſtead of *I* and *Me*; but of late (except when ſeveral writers are ſuppoſed to be concerned in the ſame work) it has been thought more elegant, becauſe it is become more faſhionable, at leaſt in ſerious compoſition, to uſe thoſe pronouns in the ſingular.—It appears, then, that though the three pronouns in queſtion are neceſſary in all languages, the modes of applying them are not in all nations uniform.

Thoſe

Thoſe of the firſt and ſecond perſons have no diſtinction of gender in any language I know *; nor is it neceſſary they ſhould. For perſons converſing together muſt know one another's ſex from the voice, dreſs, and other circumſtances; and therefore it is not more requiſite that their words ſhould imply it, than that my friend, every time he ſpeaks to me, ſhould tell me his name. *I* and *You*, therefore, *ego* and *tu*, belong to both ſexes indifferently, and are maſculine or feminine, according to the ſex of the perſons whoſe names they ſtand for. Thus a man would ſay, *Ego ſum ille quem quæris*, I am he whom you ſeek; but a woman would ſay, *Ego ſum illa quam quæris*, I am ſhe whom you ſeek. The pronoun *ego*, *I*, is the ſame in both ſentences: the other words, that admit of ſuch variation, aſſume the gender of the ſpeaker.

The pronoun of the third perſon muſt have the diſtinction of gender. It repreſents that which is the ſubject of the converſation; the gender whereof, if it be abſent, cannot be known to the hearer, unleſs notified by the words that are ſpoken. If the ſubject of converſation be a man, the pronoun that ſtands for it muſt be maſculine; if a woman, it muſt be feminine;

* In Hebrew, the pronoun of the ſecond perſon has the diſtinction of gender. But this cannot be neceſſary in language, becauſe it is particular.

if a thing, it may be neuter, unleſs the cuſtom of the language determine otherwiſe. So that in language it would ſeem neceſſary, or at leaſt convenient, that there ſhould be three pronouns of the third perſon, anſwering to *he*, *ſhe*, *it*; *ille*, *illa*, *illud*; *ekeinos*, *ekeinê*, *ekeino*.

The neceſſity, or the utility, of this, will be ſtill more apparent, (as Mr. Harris ingeniouſly obſerves) if we ſuppoſe it wanting. Suppoſe then, that in Engliſh there is no other pronoun of the third perſon but *he* and *him*; and that, in an account of Adam and Eve and the forbidden fruit, we read thus, "*He* prevailed on *him* to eat *him*;" it is plain, that from theſe words we ſhould not know what was eaten, who did eat, or who adviſed to eat. But let the genders of the pronoun be diſtinguiſhed, "*She* prevailed "on *him* to eat *it*;" and all ambiguity vaniſhes.

Further: the thing or perſon ſpoken of, which is notified by the pronoun of the third perſon, may bear various relations to the ſpeakers, as well as to other things: it may be near, or diſtant, preſent or abſent, belonging to the ſpeaker, or to the hearer, or to ſome other perſon, &c. Hence it will be convenient to have a variety of pronouns expreſſive of the third perſon under theſe various relations; as *this*, *that*, *mine*, *thine*, *his*, *hers*, *theirs*, *ours*, &c.—But obſerve, that

theſe words are not of the nature of pronouns, except when they ſupply the place of a noun; which is not always the caſe. They are pronouns, when we ſay, "Give me "*that*" (pointing to it)—"I will keep *this*." When they do not ſupply the place of a noun; but are joined to a noun, in order to aſcertain or define it, they belong to a claſs of words, to be conſidered hereafter, and may be called pronominal *articles*; as in theſe examples: *this man* I eſteem; *that man* I admire; *your ſtature* is tall; *my health* is bad, &c.

The perſon who ſpeaks, and the perſon who is ſpoken to, may either of them be the ſubject of converſation; as "*I* am *he* who "ſent you a letter yeſterday, *You* are the "*man* I was looking for;"—ſo that the pronouns of the firſt and ſecond perſon may coincide with the third: but with one another they cannot; for, to ſay, I am thou, or, thou art I, would not be ſenſe in any language, becauſe it implies a confuſion of perſons, and that a man is not himſelf, but ſome other man.

The pronouns of the firſt and ſecond perſon differ alſo in another reſpect from thoſe of the third. *I* and *Thou*, *We* and *Ye*, *Us* and *You*, *Me* and *Thee*, point out the perſons whoſe names they ſtand for, and are therefore underſtood even when nothing previous has been ſaid. But *He*, *She*, *It*, &c. are

terms

terms of univerſal application; and cannot be underſtood, unleſs they are referred to ſomething that went before, or is to come after, in the diſcourſe. If I ſay, "I am "hungry," or, "Thou art good," the perſon ſignified by the pronoun is known to be no other than myſelf the ſpeaker, or him or her to whom I addreſs myſelf; and this is equally known, whether I have ſaid any thing previous or not. But if I begin a ſubject by ſaying, "*He* is wiſe, *She* is fair, I want *them*," I am not underſtood, till I ſay expreſly, what the perſons or the things are, to which I allude.

The diviſions of pronouns into Primitive and Derivative, and into Demonſtrative, Reciprocal, Interrogative, Poſſeſſive, &c. may be found in any common grammar; and therefore I ſhall ſay nothing of them in this place. But there is one diviſion of Pronouns, which muſt not be overlooked, becauſe it leads to ſome remarks of a more general nature.

All the pronouns hitherto mentioned may introduce a ſentence, and are therefore called *Prepoſitive*. But there is alſo a *Subjunctive* pronoun; the nature of which I ſhall illuſtrate by an example ſimilar to that which Mr. Harris has given.

If I ſay, "The magnet is a ſtone: The "magnet attracts iron," I utter two ſen-

tences, that are distinct and perfectly independent; for either may be understood without the other. If instead of the noun *magnet* in the second sentence I put the pronoun *it*, and say, "The magnet is a stone: it "attracts iron;" the two sentences are still distinct in syntax, but in meaning not independent; for, to find the sense of *it* in the last, you must look to what went before, which informs you, that *magnet* is the noun whose place is supplied by that pronoun. Now it is easy to join these two sentences into one, by means of the copulative conjunction, "The magnet is a stone, and it attracts "iron." Remove the words *and it*, and in their stead insert the pronoun *which* or *that*: "The magnet is a stone, *which* attracts "iron;" and you form one sentence of the same meaning, and somewhat more concise than the other. This word *which* is the subjunctive pronoun I speak of. It expresses the united powers of the copulative conjunction *and*, and of the prepositive pronoun *it*: and herein consists its character. When it relates to a rational being, it commonly assumes, in modern English, the form *who* or *that*; and *which*, or *that*, when it alludes to things irrational or inanimate. In old English, *which* is often used where in modern English we should say *who*; as in the first clause of the Lord's prayer.* It is sometimes

* Some clergymen, to show their extreme delicacy, read "Our Father, *who* art in heaven." But if nothing will

times omitted in colloquial ſtyle, as in this example, "The perſon you ſpeak of is not "the perſon I mean." The correſpondent pronoun in Greek is * *hos* and *hoſtis*; in Latin, *qui*, *quæ*, *quod*.

But I will not affirm, that this ſubjunctive pronoun is either ſo neceſſary, or ſo frequent, in all languages, as in thoſe which are moſt familiar to us. Being framed for the purpoſe of ſubjoining one ſentence to another, and conſequently of making one complex ſentence of two or more ſimple ſentences, it is evident, that if we could be ſatisfied with expreſſing ourſelves in ſhort ſentences, this pronoun might in many caſes be wanted. And it is obſervable, that illiterate perſons and children rarely uſe it; joining their ſhort periods, where they chooſe to join them, by the connective *and*; which is indeed a ſimpler and more obvious expedient. In ſome very antient languages, too, as the Hebrew, which

will pleaſe them, but what is modern, why do they not alſo change *pardoneth* and *abſolveth* into *pardons* and *abſolves*, *ghoſt* into *ſpirit*, *world without end* into *through all eternity*, and all the other old words and terminations into new ones? Theſe old modes of language, in writings conſecrated to religious uſe, ſhould never be altered, till they become unintelligible, or ludicrous, or likely to occaſion a miſtake of the ſenſe.—Virgil, Salluſt, and Quintilian knew, and all good writers and criticks are ſenſible, that old words judiciouſly applied give an air of grandeur to certain kinds of compoſition, and that familiar expreſſions have often an effect directly contrary.

* ὁς—ὁστις.

have

have been employed chiefly for expreſſing plain ſentiments in the plaineſt manner, without aiming at any elaborate length or harmony of periods, this pronoun occurs not ſo often, as in Greek and Latin, and thoſe other tongues, which have been embelliſhed by the joint labours of the philoſopher and rhetorician. Read the firſt chapter of Geneſis: and you will find that the ſubjunctive pronoun occurs but ſeldom; the ſentences being ſhort, particularly towards the beginning, and joined for the moſt part by the connective. And the ſame ſimplicity of compoſition is frequent in Scripture, eſpecially in the hiſtorical parts; which in that Divine book is a great beauty, and an evidence both of its truth, and of its antiquity. For had the diction been more elaborate, it would have had too much the air of human contrivance, and of the arts of latter times. But in other compoſitions, the ſame unadorned ſimplicity would not always be agreeable. For we are not diſpleaſed to find human decorations in a work of human art. Beſides, the ſentiments of inſpiration ſupport themſelves by their intrinſick dignity; whereas thoſe of men muſt often be ſupported and recommended by the graces of language. The inſpired author commands our attention, and has a right to it; but other writers muſt flatter and amuſe, in order to prevail with us to attend.—But this by the by. I only meant to ſay, that complex ſentences,

which

which without the ſubjunctive pronoun could not eaſily be framed, may be ſo contrived and diſpoſed, as to contribute not a little to the beauty of human compoſitions: though in writings of a higher order we neither expect nor deſire them; becauſe we know, that, however pleaſing, they are but human contrivances at the beſt. The ſame ornaments are unſeemly in a temple, which we admire in a private apartment; and that rhetorical art, which in Virgil and Cicero is ſo charming, would be quite unſuitable to the majeſty of Scripture.

The ſubjunctive pronoun may join two ſentences ſo cloſely, that to a ſuperficial obſerver they ſhall ſeem to be but one. What can be more clearly one ſentence, than the following, "The man whom you ſee is Pe-" ter?" Is it poſſible, one might ſay, to analyſe it into two? Nothing more eaſy. Here are two diſtinct affirmations; and here, therefore, may be two ſentences. "You ſee a " man. That man is Peter." Both theſe are comprehended in the abovementioned propoſition; and theſe two taken together expreſs its full meaning. It is, therefore, not a ſimple, but a compound ſentence. In fact, wherever there is a ſubjunctive pronoun, there muſt be the import of both a pronoun, and a copulative conjunction: and all conjunctions connect ſentences, as will be ſeen hereafter.

CHAP. II.

OF ATTRIBUTIVES.

SECT. I.

Of Attributives — Adjectives, Participles, Verbs.—Their diſtinguiſhing characters.—Compariſon of Adjectives.

THE words hitherto conſidered have been called by ſome writers Primary and Secondary Subſtantives. Both claſſes denote ſubſtances or things; the former, directly; the latter, by ſupplying the place of the former.

But by nouns and pronouns alone not one human ſentiment could be expreſſed. There muſt, therefore, in all languages, be other claſſes of words. Men not only ſpeak of perſons and things, but alſo of the qualities, characters, and operations, of perſons and things. What would it ſignify to ſpeak of Ceſar, if one were never to ſay whether Ceſar was good or bad, or what were his qualities, or what his actions?

If we were to hear ſuch an expreſſion as, —*was brave*—*was admired*—*invaded Britain*, we ſhould naturally aſk, *who* was ſo? and,

who did ſo? for till we be informed of this, we cannot know what is meant. Not that the words *brave*, *admired*, *invaded*, have no meaning; but becauſe they denote certain qualities or attributes, which lead our thoughts to the perſon or thing to whom they are ſuppoſed to belong. For qualities imply ſomething in which they inhere, or to which they pertain: and if there were no perſons or things in the univerſe, there could be no qualities or attributes. Now the words that denote attributes or qualities are in general called *Attributives*.

The antient Greek Grammarians called them * *rhêmata*, *verba*, *verbs*: — whatever may be ſaid, or, more accurately, whatever may be affirmed, or denied, concerning any thing or perſon. Thus of Ceſar, it may be affirmed, that he was *brave*, that he was *admired*, that he *invaded Britain*; and of the ſame Ceſar, it may be denied, that he was *cruel*, that he was *deſpiſed*, that he *conquered Britain*. In theſe affirmations and negations, *Ceſar* is a ſubſtantive, name, or noun; *he* is a pronoun; and *brave*, *cruel*, *admired*, *deſpiſed*, *invaded*, *conquered*, are attributives.

In all the languages we know, and probably in all others, there are three ſorts of attributives, which are called in the grammars, Adjectives, Participles, and Verbs.—

* ῥηματα.

The

The Adjective denotes a ſimple quality, as brave, cruel, good, ſwift, round, ſquare.—The Participle is ſaid to denote a quality, together with a certain modification of time; as *amans*, loving, which relates to time preſent; *amatus*, loved, which alludes to time paſt; and *amaturus*, about to love, which points at time future *.—The Verb is ſtill more complex than the participle. It not only expreſſes an attribute, and refers that attribute to time, paſt, preſent, or to come; but alſo comprehends an aſſertion; ſo that it may form, when joined to a noun, a complete ſentence, or propoſition. Thus when I ſay, *Alexander ambulat*, Alexander walks, I utter, though in two words, a complete ſentence: and this ſentence comprehends in it theſe four things: firſt, a ſubſtantive proper name, *Alexander*; ſecondly, an attribute, quality, or operation of Alexander, *walking*; thirdly, this quality or operation fixed down to the preſent time, *walks*, or *is walking*; and fourthly, this quality as affirmed to belong to the perſon ſpoken of, Alexander *is* walking.

From the verb take away the aſſertion, and there remains the attribute and the time, which are commonly thought to form the

* This idea of the Participle may ſuffice at preſent; having been generally adopted by Grammarians. But it is not accurate; nay it is very inaccurate. See the fifth ſection of this chapter.

eſſence of the participle; and from the participle take away the time, and there remains the ſimple quality, as expreſſed by the adjective. Thus from *amat*, the verb, *loveth*, or *is loving*, take away the aſſertion *is*, and there remains *loving*, which is called a participle of the preſent time: and if we conſider the attributive *loving*, not as bearing reference to the preſent or to any particular time, but as expreſſing a perſon's general character which remains with him at all times, we transform it into an adjective; as when we ſay, a *loving* parent, a *ſympathiſing* friend, Ariſtides fuit *amantiſſimus* æqui. *Doctus*, *Spectatus*, *Probatus*, and many other attributives of the ſame nature, are participles, when they imply any notion of time; but adjectives, when they denote a quality ſimply, without regard to time.

All ſubſtances, natural, imaginary, artificial, and abſtract, and all perſons; and, in a word, whatever is expreſſed by a ſubſtantive, may be characteriſed by qualities, and, conſequently, joined in ſyntax to adjectives, to participles, and to verbs. We may ſay, a *tall man*, a *riſing man*, a *man ſpeaks* or *runs*: a *mournful muſe*, an *inſpiring muſe*, the *muſe inſpires* or *ſings*: a *ſwift ſhip*, a *toſſed ſhip*, the *ſhip overtakes* the enemy: of *virtue* we may ſay, that *it* is *lovely*, that *it* is *praiſed*, that *it brings* happineſs: and, of Socrates, that *he* was *wiſe*, that *he* was *condemned*,

demned, and that *he drank* poiſon. Pronouns, too, as they ſtand for nouns, may be characteriſed in the ſame manner; as in the two laſt examples.

From the method of arrangement commonly followed in grammars, we might be apt to conclude, that adjectives are of the ſame claſs with nouns, and that the participle is a part of the verb. But when we examine theſe claſſes of words philoſophically, that is, according to their meaning and uſe, and without regard to their derivations, or final letters, we ſhall be ſatisfied, that the arrangement here given is right, and that the other, though not materially wrong, is however erroneous. In their nature, no two ſorts of words can be more unlike, than the ſubſtantive and the adjective; and therefore it muſt be a fault in diſtribution, to refer both to the Noun. The Subſtantive is the name of the thing ſpoken of, and in Greek and Latin is called *name*, for it is *onoma* in the one, and *nomen* in the other: and it would have been better, if in Engliſh we had called it *the name*, rather than *the noun*; for this laſt word, being uſed only in grammar, we are more apt to miſunderſtand, than the other, which is in familiar uſe. But the adjective is not the name either of a thing or of a perſon; nor is it a name at all: it denotes a quality; and the Greeks called it, not *onoma*, but *epitheton* or epi-

thet, and ſometimes rhêma; which laſt word means whatever is affirmed or denied of a thing or perſon. It is true, the term *rhêma* does not diſtinguiſh it from the verb and participle; but then it does not confound it with the noun or ſubſtantive. And in fact, the adjective or epithet partakes more of the verb and participle, than of the noun. So that, if there be any reaſon for diſtinguiſhing the noun from the verb, there is equal reaſon for diſtinguiſhing the noun from the adjective: and the term *adjective-noun*, however common, is really as incongruous, as *verb-noun* or *participle-noun* would be.

The reaſon, why grammarians have confounded the adjective with the noun, ſeems to be, becauſe in Greek and Latin both are declined by caſes, reſemble each other in termination, and, when joined in ſyntax, agree in caſe, gender, and number. But this is no good reaſon. If it were, participles alſo ſhould be called nouns: which in no grammar, ſo far as I know, has ever been done.—Adjectives are ſometimes called *adnouns*; which would ſeem not altogether improper, becauſe they are joined to nouns; but is not accurate, becauſe it does not diſtinguiſh the adjective from the participle and verb, which are alſo joined to nouns. *

The

* If adjectives may ever with propriety be called *Adnouns*, it ſeems to be, when they are neceſſary to give the full

The Participle, *Participium*, (in Greek * *metochê*) was probably ſo called, becauſe it *partakes* of the nature both of the verb and of the adjective; of the former, by expreſſing time, and of the latter, by denoting a quality. But, though derived from the verb, it is not to be conſidered as a part of it; becauſe, though it may reſemble a verb in expreſſing a quality with time, it implies no affirmation, and conſequently wants the verb's diſtinguiſhing character. If its derivation were to give it any right to be conſidered as a part of the verb, then the adverb *preſumptuouſly* might as well claim to be a *part* of the adjective *preſumptuous*, of the noun *preſumption*, and of the verb *preſume*. Accordingly, the Latin grammarians, while they confound adjectives with nouns, do yet very properly diſtinguiſh the participle from every other part of ſpeech.

Wherever adjectives and participles admit the diſtinctions of gender, number, and caſe, it would ſeem natural, that, in theſe three reſpects, they ſhould agree with the

full ſignification of a noun. Thus the *golden eagle* is no more than the *name* of one ſpecies of the aquiline tribe. Accordingly, what in one tongue is thus expreſſed by two words may in another be ſignified by one. Thus χρυσαιετος is the name of the ſame bird in Greek. Similar inſtances are innumerable; as the *Mediterranean ſea*, a *ſetting dog*, &c. See *The Philoſophy of Rhetorick*. Book iii. chap. 2.

* Μετοχη, from μετεχειν participare.

nouns to which they belong. Indeed, I cannot ſee, why adjectives and participles ſhould have thoſe diſtinctions, unleſs it be, that they may the more effectually coincide with their reſpective nouns. For *bonus, movens, good, moving*, or any other adjective or participle, conſidered in itſelf, cannot be of any number or of any gender: for it may be aſſerted of one, or of many; and of that which is either maſculine or feminine, and of that which is neuter. Twelve men or women, for example, may be *good*, or *in motion*, as well as one; and many ſorts of animals, and inanimate things, as well as one ſort.—Agreeably to theſe remarks, we find, that in Latin, Greek, and ſome other languages, wherein the termination of adjectives and participles varies according to the gender and number;—that in thoſe languages, I ſay, adjectives and participles follow the gender, number, and caſe of the ſubſtantives to which they are joined: but Engliſh adjectives and participles, which never vary the termination, and are all of the nature of indeclinable Latin adjectives (as *frugi, nequam, centum*) adapt themſelves, without any change, to nouns of all genders, caſes, and numbers.—Whence we may infer, that the declenſion of adjectives and participles, though it takes place in many tongues, and may contribute to elegance and harmony of ſtyle, is not eſſential to language, and is therefore a conſideration which belongs not

to

to Univerſal Grammar. And it will appear afterwards, that the ſame thing is true of the declenſion of nouns.

The *compariſon* of adjectives is another ſource of variety, which demands attention; that we may ſee how far it is, or is not, eſſential to language.—Things or perſons, that have a certain quality in common, may differ in reſpect of the *degrees* in which they have it. This paper is white, and ſnow is white; but ſnow is *whiter* than this paper. Pliny was eloquent, Ceſar was more eloquent, and Cicero was the moſt eloquent of the three. Sophocles was wiſe, Socrates was wiſer; but Solomon was the wiſeſt of men. Theſe, and the like degrees, of the ſame quality, muſt be obſervable in all ages and nations, muſt be ſpoken of by all men, and muſt therefore in one way or other be expreſſed in all languages.

In Latin and Engliſh, there are four ways of expreſſing this variety. The firſt is, by joining to the adjective an adverb of comparative increaſe; as *more* hard, *very* hard, *moſt* hard; *magis durus*, *valde durus*, *maxime durus*.—The ſecond is, by varying the termination of the adjective: *wiſe*, *wiſer*, *wiſeſt*; *ſapiens*, *ſapientior*, *ſapientiſſimus*; * *ſophos*, *ſophôteros*, *ſophôtatos*.—The third is, by aſſuming other adjectives, which do themſelves

* Σοφος, σοφωτερος, σοφωταλος.

denote

denote both a quality and comparison; as *good, better*; *bad, worse*; *bonus, melior, optimus*.—The fourth is, by blending the two methods last mentioned: as in English, *good, better, best*; where *best* (contracted from the Saxon *Betteſt* or *Betſt*) is plainly allied to *better*, but *better* (though formed from the Saxon *Bet*) is, in English, a primitive word, not derived from *good*, nor from any other adjective now in the language. So in Latin, *malus, pejor, peſſimus*; and ſo in Greek * *kakos, cheirôn, cheiriſtos*.—In other tongues, other methods equally convenient, perhaps, and equally elegant, may have been adopted, for marking thoſe increaſing degrees of qualities, which are commonly called *degrees of compariſon*.

As many verbs either denote, or imply action; and as the ſame action may be performed with greater or with leſs energy; it ſeems reaſonable, that they, as well as adjectives, ſhould admit of increaſe or of decreaſe in their ſignification; which is probably the caſe in all languages. But in every language that we know, it is done by means of adverbs, and not by varying the termination of the verb: for this would have added unneceſſarily to the complexneſs of that attributive, which in moſt languages is complex enough already. Thus we ſay in Eng-

* κακος, χειρων, χειριστος.

liſh,

liſh, Brutus loved money *much*, Cato loved it *more*, Craſſus loved it *exceedingly*. So in Latin, *amat*, *magis amat*, *vehementor amat*.

Such adverbs as expreſs the meaning of attributives, may admit of compariſon, if the attribute itſelf be capable of *more* and *leſs*. Thus *diu*, for a *long* time, is varied into *diutius* and *diutiſſime*; *ſtulte*, in a *fooliſh* manner, or fooliſhly, into *ſtultius* and *ſtultiſſime*; *prope*, in a *near* ſituation, into *propius*, and *proxime*, &c. So in Engliſh we ſay, adverbially, long, longer, very long; fooliſhly, more fooliſhly, moſt fooliſhly; near, nearer, neareſt or next.

Thoſe words admit not of compariſon, which denote what is ſo definite as to be unſuſceptible of *more* and *leſs*. Quality, ſays Ariſtotle, admits of more and leſs; but ſubſtance does not. If this be allowed, it follows, that ſubſtantives do not admit of compariſon, but that attributives do. Goliah was *taller* and *ſtronger* than David; but David was as much a male of the human ſpecies as Goliah. If we ſay of any one, that he is *more a man* than another, we give to the noun the ſenſe of an attributive; for the meaning muſt be, that he is *more manly*, or that he poſſeſſes ſome other good qualities in a higher degree. So when Pope ſays, of a certain perſon, that he is "a tradeſman, "meek, and *much a liar*," the laſt phraſe is the ſame with *much given* to lying. And

when

when the Scripture declares, of the phariſee's proſelyte, that he is *more a child of hell*, the meaning is, that he is *more liable* to puniſhment, becauſe more wicked; and therefore, the words *a child of hell*, have the import of an adjective.

Pronouns, as they ſupply the place of nouns, muſt, like them, be incapable of compariſon. It is true, we ſay in Engliſh the *very ſame*, and in Plautus we find *Ipſiſſimus* the ſuperlative of *ipſe* or *ipſus*. But theſe are redundancies. For *the ſame*, and *ipſe*, expreſs all that can be meant by *the very ſame*, and *ipſiſſimus*. Many ſuch ſuperfluities find their way into the language of converſation; but in ſolemn and elegant ſtyle it is better to avoid them.

Adjectives, whereof the meaning is already as extenſive as it can be, as *omnis*, *cunctus*, *totus*, *univerſus*; and thoſe that denote exact figure, or definite quantity or number, admit not of degrees of compariſon, becauſe they are unſuſceptible of *more* and *leſs*. Seven grains of ſand are as much and as really *ſeven*, as ſeven planets. My *two-foot* rule is as much a two-foot rule as yours. One circle cannot be *more circular* than another. We may ſay, however, that one *figure* is more *circular* than another *figure*. But in this example the adjective ſignifies, not exact figure, but *approaching to the figure of a circle*; and therefore, being, in reſpect

of

of the figure, indefinite, is capable of more and leſs, and conſequently of compariſon.

How many *degrees* of compariſon are there? Every ſchool-boy can anſwer, Three; for three are mentioned by name in his grammar. How many parts are in an inch? A common joiner would perhaps anſwer, Eight, or Ten; for that is the number marked on his foot-rule. But if we conſider this matter philoſophically, we ſhall ſee reaſon to affirm, that the degrees of compariſon are, like the parts of an inch, infinite in number, or at leaſt indefinite.—A mountain is larger than a mite:—by how many degrees? How much bigger is the earth than a grain of ſand? By how many degrees was Socrates wiſer than Alcibiades? or Cleopatra more beautiful than Octavia? or Varro more learned than Cato? Or by how many degrees is ſnow whiter than this paper? It is plain, that to theſe and the like queſtions no *definite* anſwers can be returned.

In quantities, however, that may be *exactly* meaſured, the degrees of exceſs may be exactly aſcertained, and definitely expreſſed. A foot is juſt twelve times as long as an inch; and a man ſeven feet high is double the height of one of forty-two inches. But in regard to *qualities*, and to thoſe quantities which cannot be meaſured exactly, it is impoſſible to ſay how many degrees may be comprehended in the comparative exceſs.

But though these degrees be infinite or indefinite in fact, they cannot be so in language. Nor would it be convenient, if language were to express many of them. More need not be expressed than two; the first, to signify simple excess, which is commonly called the Comparative; and the other to denote very great excess, or the greatest, which has obtained the name of the Superlative. * As to the Positive degree of comparison, which grammarians talk of, it is nothing more than the simple form of the adjective, and implies not either comparison or degree. The reason, says Ruddiman, why it has been accounted one of the three degrees, is, because the other two are founded upon and formed from it.

But how is it possible by two words to express accurately the various degrees of more and less, in which the same attribute may appear in those things that we compare together? I answer, that, in measured quantities, and in qualities that may be ascertained by the application of quantity, this is easily done by means of numbers:—as, a foot is *twelve* times *longer* than an inch; an hour is *sixty* times *longer* than a minute; boiling water is *one hundred and sixteen* degrees hotter than the human blood.—In re-

* The expression here is too brief to be accurate; but it will be more fully explained by and by.

gard

gard to unmeaſured quantities and qualities, I anſwer, that the degrees of more and leſs may be expreſſed, intelligibly, at leaſt, if not accurately, by adverbs, or words of like import:—as, Socrates was *much* wiſer than Alcibiades; Snow is *a great deal* whiter than this paper; Epaminondas was *far* the moſt accompliſhed of the Thebans; the evening-ſtar is a glorious object, but the ſun is *incomparably* more glorious; the Deity is *infinitely* greater than the greateſt of his creatures. The inaccuracy of theſe and the like expreſſions is not a material inconvenience; and, though it were, it is unavoidable; for human ſpeech can only expreſs human thought; and where thought is neceſſarily inaccurate, language muſt be ſo too.

Sanctius, the author of a grammatical treatiſe called *Minerva*, maintains, that the Superlative degree does not imply compariſon. But, though he was a learned man, I muſt differ from him in this, as in many other things: and the leſs regard is due to his judgment, as he ſeems to have written with a view to eſtabliſh paradoxes, and abuſe the grammarians. To me the Superlative ſeems to be as really a comparative, as the Comparative itſelf. But that this may appear with full evidence, I muſt obſerve, that, in all the languages I know, and probably in all others, there are two Superlatives; which, though ſimilar in meaning, are different in

their

their uſe. The firſt may be called the ſuperlative *of compariſon*; the ſecond, the ſuperlative *of eminence*.

1. When I ſay, that Cato was *more learned* than Marius, and that Varro was *the moſt learned* of all the Romans; is not a compariſon of Varro with other learned Romans as plainly implied in the laſt clauſe, as a compariſon of Cato with Marius is in the firſt? For I would aſk, whether one who had never known or heard of any other Roman could truly and rationally ſay, "that "no other Roman was ſo learned as Varro;" a ſentiment, which is plainly ſignified when we ſay, that Varro was the moſt learned of all the people of Rome; and which no man (who had any regard to ſenſe or truth) would entertain, or expreſs, till after a compariſon had actually been made. So in this example, "Socrates was wiſer than any other Athe-"nian, but Solomon was the wiſeſt of men," Socrates is compared with the Athenians, and Solomon with mankind in general.

What then, it may be ſaid, if both imply compariſon, is the difference between the Comparative and the Superlative? Is it, that the ſuperlative always expreſſes *a greater exceſs* than the Comparative? No. Socrates was the *wiſeſt* of the Athenians, but Solomon was *wiſer* than Socrates:—here a higher ſuperiority of wiſdom is denoted by the comparative *wiſer*, than by the ſuperlative *wiſeſt*.

—Is

—Is it, becauſe the Superlative implies a compariſon of *one with many*, while the comparative implies a compariſon of *one with one?* No: this is not always the caſe neither. The Pſalmiſt ſays, that "he is *wiſer than all* his "teachers;" where, though the comparative is uſed, there is a compariſon of *one with many*.—The real difference between theſe two degrees of compariſon may be explained thus.

When we uſe the Superlative, it is in conſequence of having compared individuals with the ſpecies to which they belong, or one or more ſpecies with the genus under which they are comprehended. Thus, *Socrates was the wiſeſt of the Athenians; the Athenians were the moſt learned of antient nations; Homer, Virgil, and Milton, are the greateſt of poets*:—where obſerve, that Socrates, though compared with his countrymen, is at the ſame time conſidered as one of them; that the Athenians, though compared with antient nations, are conſidered as one of thoſe nations; and that Homer, Virgil, and Milton are conſidered as three individuals of that ſpecies of authors, with whom they are compared, and to whom it is affirmed that they are ſuperiour. And hence, this ſuperlative is in modern language followed by the prepoſition *of*, and in Greek and Latin by the genitive caſe of the plural; to ſignify, that the object, which has the pre-

eminence, is conſidered as *belonging to that claſs* of things or perſons, with which it is compared.

But, when we uſe the comparative degree, the objects compared are ſet in *direct oppoſition*, and the one is not conſidered as a part of the other, or as comprehended under it. If I ſay, "Cicero was more eloquent than "the Romans," I ſpeak abſurdly; becauſe every body knows, that of the claſs of men expreſſed by the word *Romans* Cicero was one: but when I ſay, that Cicero was more eloquent than all the *other* Romans, or than any *other* Roman, I ſpeak not abſurdly; becauſe, though the perſons ſpoken of were all of the ſame claſs or city, yet Cicero is here ſet in contradiſtinction to the reſt of his countrymen, and is not conſidered as one of the perſons with whom he is compared.—Moreover, if the Pſalmiſt had ſaid, "I am "the wiſeſt of my teachers," the phraſe would have been improper, becauſe implying that he was one of them: but when he ſays, "I am wiſer than my teachers," he does not conſider himſelf as one of them, but ſets himſelf in contradiſtinction to them.—Again, "Solomon was the wiſeſt of men:"—here Solomon is compared with a ſpecies of beings whereof he himſelf was one, and therefore the Superlative is uſed: but "Solomon was "of men the wiſer," is nonſenſe, (at leaſt in Engliſh) becauſe the uſe of the compara-

tive

tive would imply, that *he* was ſet in oppoſition to *mankind*; which is ſo far from being the caſe, that he is expreſly conſidered as one of them.

In Engliſh we cannot ſay, "he is the "talleſt of the two;" it muſt be, "the taller "of the two:" nor do we ſay, "he is the "taller of the three;" it muſt be "the "talleſt." But this does not hold univerſally in other languages. The Greeks ſometimes have the ſuperlative, where we ſhould uſe the comparative. * *Outis allê duſtucheſtatê gunê emou pephuken:* "there is no other "woman *moſt* wretched than I;" or, (to give the meaning in better Engliſh) "there "is no other woman more ſuperlatively "wretched." They alſo uſe the comparative inſtead of the ſuperlative. "And now "abide (ſays the Apoſtle) Faith, Hope, Cha-"rity; theſe three; but the *greater* of theſe "is Charity:" for the word in Greek is † *meizôn* and not ‡ *megiſtê*. Or we might render it thus: "And now abide Faith, "Hope, Charity, theſe three; but greater "than thoſe (that is, than faith and hope) "is charity." In like manner, it is ſaid in the Goſpel, that "a grain of muſtard-ſeed "is the *ſmaller* of all ſeeds; but when grown "up, it is the *greater* of herbs." In both theſe places, our Tranſlators have preſerved

* Ουτις αλλη δυσυχεσατη γυνη εμου πεφυκεν. † Μειζων.
‡ Μεγιση.

the Engliſh idioms.—Some examples of the ſame kind may be found in Latin authors: but they are not frequent, either in Latin, or in Greek.

2. The other Superlative I took the liberty to call the ſuperlative *of eminence*. It denotes very great exceſs or defect, but is not joined to any words that directly intimate compariſon: as when we ſay, Cicero was a *very eloquent*, or a *moſt eloquent* man; St. Kilda is a *very ſmall* iſland; a mouſe is a *moſt diminutive* quadruped.

Yet even in this Superlative, it may be ſaid, that ſomething of compariſon ſeems to be remotely or indirectly intimated; that, for example, when we ſay, "he is a very tall "man," it muſt be underſtood, that we compare the perſon ſpoken of with other men, or his ſtature with the ordinary human ſtature. This is true: but yet we cannot affirm, that compariſon is more clearly intimated in this ſuperlative, than in the ſimple attributive *tall*; for when we ſay, "he is a "tall man," we muſt be underſtood to make the ſame reference to the ordinary ſize of men. So when we ſay, "Solomon was a "moſt wiſe, or a very wiſe man," we do indeed diſtinguiſh him from other men who were not ſo wiſe: but we mark a diſtinction of the ſame kind, though not the ſame in degree, when we ſay ſimply, that "Solomon "was wiſe." Whereas, in the uſe of the former

former ſuperlative, the compariſon is direct and particular: for we not only expreſs great ſuperiority or inferiority, but alſo mention the perſons or things that are ſuperiour, as well as thoſe that are inferiour.

In Engliſh, we diſtinguiſh theſe ſuperlatives, by prefixing to the one the definite article *the*, ſubjoining the prepoſition *of* or *among*, with the name of the ſpecies or claſs of things compared; as "Solomon was the "wiſeſt of (or among) men: Hector was "the moſt valiant of (or among) the Tro-"jans." To the other ſuperlative we only prefix the indefinite article *a*: "he was a "very good man; he is a moſt valiant ſol-"dier." And obſerve, that our Superlative termination *eſt* is peculiar to the former: we may ſay "Homer was the ſublimeſt, or the "moſt ſublime, of poets;" but we cannot ſay, "Homer was a ſublimeſt poet;" it muſt be, "Homer was a moſt ſublime, or a very "ſublime poet."—Now, in Italian, the rule is contrary; for the ſuperlative termination denotes what I call the ſuperlative of eminence, *Cicerone fu eloquentiſſimo*, Cicero was moſt eloquent, or very eloquent, or Cicero was a moſt eloquent man: and the ſuperlative of compariſon is expreſſed by the adverb *piu* or *more*, which, with the definite article *il* prefixed, aſſumes the ſignification of *moſt*; as *Cicerone fu il piu eloquente dei Romani*,

Cicero was the moſt eloquent of the Romans.

In a word, (that I may not take up more time with the peculiarities of individual tongues) different nations may have different contrivances for expreſſing theſe degrees of compariſon; but in one way or other it ſeems neceſſary that they ſhould be expreſſed in all languages.

In Hebrew, the compariſon of adjectives is intimated, not by inflection, but by the aid of a prepoſition. Thus, in the comparative, "Wiſdom is better than rubies," would be literally "Wiſdom is good above "rubies." In the ſuperlative of compariſon, "He is the beſt of them all," would be, "He is good above them all." And, for marking the ſuperlative of eminence, they uſe adverbs correſponding to our *moſt*, *very*, &c. This method is extremely ſimple, and yet quite ſufficient for the purpoſe.

As I have here mentioned the Hebrew, and ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak of it once and again in the ſequel, I think it my duty to ſay, that for the little knowledge I have of the analogy of that language I am indebted to my amiable friend and colleague, Dr. Campbell; who in his *Philoſophy of Rhetorick*, and other works, has given many proofs of elegance as a writer, and of uncommon penetra-

penetration as a philoſopher and critick; and who will ſoon (I hope) make an important addition to the Theological Literature of his country, by a new verſion of the four Goſpels, with explanatory notes and critical Diſſertations: a work for which he is eminently qualified; not only by his natural talents and philological accuracy, but alſo by his comprehenſive knowledge of the languages, and by that indefatigable zeal for religious truth, which has engaged him to make the ſtudy of the holy ſcriptures a great part of his daily employment for many years.

SECT. II.

The Subject of Attributives continued.—Of Verbs;—their general nature inveſtigated, and expreſſed in a definition.—Conjectures in regard to the Greek and Latin inflections.

THE Adjective denotes a ſimple quality: the Participle, a quality with time*: the Verb, a quality and time together with an aſſertion. This account was already given, to diſtinguiſh theſe attributives from one another. But Verbs being of all words the moſt complex and moſt curious, it will now be proper, to inquire more minutely into their nature; and to ſhow, from what modifications of human thought they derive their origin.

We are endowed, not only with ſenſes to perceive, and with memory to retain; but alſo with reaſon and judgment, whereby we attend to things, and compare them together, ſo as to perceive their characters and mutual relations. Thus I not only *perceive* the men whom I ſee to-day, and *remember* thoſe whom I ſaw yeſterday; but alſo *form judgments* concerning them: and thoſe judgments I expreſs, when I ſay, that one is ſtrong, another weak;

* See the fifth ſection of this chapter.

one

one tall, another ſhort; one young, another old; one good, another bad; one wiſe, another fooliſh, &c.

Take now any one of theſe judgments, and expreſs it by itſelf; Solomon eſt ſapiens, Solomon is wiſe.—Concerning theſe three words, I obſerve, firſt, that they form a ſentence, or a complete enunciation of thought: ſecondly, that if the word *eſt*, *is*, were left out, the other two words, *Solomon wiſe*, or *wiſe Solomon*, would not form a ſentence: thirdly, that a ſubſtance or object is here mentioned, *Solomon*, and a quality, *wiſe*; and that the one is *affirmed* to be the character of the other: and, fourthly, that if it were not for the word *eſt*, *is*, nothing would be affirmed of either the quality or the object; for *wiſe Solomon* or *Solomon wiſe* contain no affirmation. Now the word *is*, or *eſt*, is one of thoſe words which are called *verbs*.—May we not then ſay, that "it is the nature of a "verb, firſt, to expreſs an affirmation; and, "ſecondly, to form, when united with a noun "and a quality, a complete ſentence?"

Before I proceed, it may be neceſſary to remark, that a ſentence comprehending a *thing*, a *quality*, and an *affirmation*, is in Logick called a *propoſition*; of which, the thing ſpoken of is the *ſubject*; the quality, affirmed, or denied, to belong to the ſubject, is the *predicate*; and the word, or words, containing the affirmation or negation, are the *copula*.

Thus, in the laſt example, *Solomon* is the *ſubject* of the propoſition; *is*, the *copula*; and *wiſe*, the *predicate*. Thus, in the following propoſition, "To be juſt is commendable," *to be juſt* is the *ſubject*, or that concerning which the affirmation is made; *is*, the *copula*; and *commendable*, the *predicate*, or that which is affirmed of the ſubject.—Let it be further obſerved in this place, that every propoſition is either affirmative, or negative; that is, affirms or aſſerts, that the predicate either *does agree* with the ſubject, or *does not agree* with it. When I ſay, "God is good," I pronounce an affirmative propoſition: when I ſay, "Poverty is not "criminal," I utter a negative propoſition, wherein I affirm or aſſert, that *criminal* the predicate *does not agree* with *poverty* the ſubject. Every propoſition, therefore, whether affirmative or negative, does ſtill *imply* affirmation or aſſertion: for, to deny that a thing is, is to affirm that it is not; to ſay that "Pain *is not* good," is the ſame thing with ſaying, "that it *is* evil," or "that it *is* in-"different."—Of propoſitions poſitively affirmative the verb alone is the copula; as "God is good:" ſuch as are negatively affirmative have for their copula both the verb and the negative particle, as "Poverty "*is not* criminal."—This being premiſed concerning propoſitions, I reſume the ſubject of verbs.

I ſaid,

I ſaid, that a verb is "a ſpecies of word, "which expreſſes an affirmation, and which "may form, when united with a name and "a quality, a complete ſentence."—It may be worth while to conſider, whether the latter clauſe of this definition does not comprehend the former; that is, whether every ſort of *ſentence* does not expreſs or imply affirmation.

Sentences are of various kinds. A ſingle word may convey the full import of a ſentence. And this may happen in every part of ſpeech; the article and conjunction excepted, which can never ſtand by themſelves, becauſe they have no meaning, unleſs when they are joined with other words.

Firſt; a ſingle noun may ſtand for a ſentence, and imply an affirmation. One aſks, "Is Virgil or Lucan the better poet?" I anſwer, "Virgil." And this word thus connected comprehends an entire affirmative ſentence; "Virgil *is* the better poet."—Secondly, A pronoun may be a ſentence. If it be aſked, "Is he or ſhe to blame?" and anſwered, *He*; this ſingle pronoun is equivalent to the following affirmative propoſition, "He *is* blameable."—Thirdly, An adjective may in its meaning be equally comprehenſive. "Is the day good or bad?" ſays one. I anſwer, "Good:" which means, "the day *is* good."—Fourthly, the ſame thing holds true of the participle. "Is he

"running

"running or walking?" *Running*, may be the anſwer; which being reſolved amounts to "He *is* running."—Fifthly, A verb often comprehends a ſentence, eſpecially in the antient languages. *Albeo*; that is, Ego *ſum* albus, I *am* white: Dormit; Ille *eſt* dormiens; He *is* aſleep.—Sixthly, An adverb may ſtand for an affirmative ſentence. "Are "you ſick?" it is aſked. I anſwer, *No*; which is the ſame as if I had anſwered, negatively, "I *am not* ſick," or, poſitively, "I "*am* well."—Seventhly, An interjection often contains a ſentence with affirmation; as when one tells me a melancholy tale, and I only anſwer, "Alas!" which implies, "I *am* ſorry."—Eighthly, a prepoſition may be an affirmative ſentence; "Was Virgil "before Livy, or after?" The anſwer is *Before*; which is as truly an affirmative ſentence in this connection, as if I had ſaid "Virgil *was* before Livy."

Nay, even a conjunction, an article, or a letter, when taken *materially*, as the Grammarians ſay, that is, when put for itſelf, and not as the ſign of any thing elſe, may in a certain connection amount to a complete affirmative ſentence. "Is *yet* or *neverthelefs* "the more common adverſative conjunc-"tion?" Anſwer; *Yet*: which implies, *Yet is* the more common.—"What is the "definite article in Engliſh?" Anſwer; *The*: that is, *The is* the definite article.—"What

"letter

"letter in our language is moſt offenſive to "the ear of a foreigner?" Anſwer, S; or S *is* the moſt offenſive.—All the ſentences hitherto ſpecified do plainly imply an affirmation; and that affirmation is expreſſed by *is* or *was*, or ſome other part of the verb *eſſe*, *to be*.

Moreover, Every ſentence contains a verb expreſſed or underſtood; and that verb muſt be in one or other of thoſe forms, which Grammarians call *moods*. Now every mood has a particular meaning, and gives a peculiar character to the ſentence: and, therefore, ſimple ſentences may be divided into as many ſorts, as there are ſuppoſed to be moods in a verb. I ſhall give an example of each; and it will appear, that whatever be the mood of the verb, or the form of the ſentence, there is ſtill in every ſentence an affirmation, or aſſertion, either expreſſed, or implied. Firſt, "He *is* good," is an *indicative* and affirmative ſentence: and the ſame thing may be ſaid of "He *is not* good;" which in a poſitive form may be expreſſed thus, "He *is* evil."—Secondly, "I know not "whether he be good," Neſcio an bonus ſit, is a ſentence, wherein the *ſubjunctive* mood is uſed; and, if analyſed, will appear to be an affirmative propoſition to this purpoſe, "That he is good (or, his goodneſs) *is* to me "unknown."—Thirdly, We uſe the mood called *Potential*, when we ſay, "He may be

"good,"

" good," Licet illi esse bono ; or " He ought " to be good," Debet esse bonus ; which are also affirmative sentences, and may be otherwise expressed, " To be good *is* in his power," and " To be good *is* his duty."—Fourthly, When we say, " May he be good," the mood is *optative* ; and the words comprehend the following affirmation, " That " he should be good *is* what I wish for."—Fifthly, When I ask, " Is he good ?" the mood is *interrogative* ; and the question may be resolved so as to have the same character with the foregoing propositions : " It *is* my " desire to be informed, whether he be " good."—Sixthly, " Be thou good," Esto bonus, which is the mood called *imperative*, implies also an affirmation to this purpose, " It *is* my command, or it *is* my intreaty, " that thou shouldst be good."—These are the principal moods acknowledged by grammarians : how many of them may be *necessary* in language, will appear hereafter.—As to the *infinitive* mood, I shall show in another place, that it partakes more of the nature of an abstract noun, than of a verb ; for it denotes no affirmation, and only expresses the pure meaning of the attributive, abstracted from all considerations of number and person.

Having proved, more minutely than was needful, that every sentence may be made affirmative ; and it having been observed before,

fore, that, in order to expreſs affirmation, a verb is neceſſary in every ſentence; it remains, that a verb (according to the view we have hitherto taken of it) may be defined, "A word, neceſſary in every ſentence, and "ſignifying affirmation."

Now in all the ſorts of ſentences hitherto conſidered, the affirmation is, or may be, expreſſed by that verb, which the Latins call *ſubſtantive*, but the Greeks, more properly, a verb of exiſtence, * *eſti*, *eſt*, *is*. If then this verb may alone expreſs every ſpecies of affirmation, it would ſeem to follow, that no other verb is neceſſary in language. And, in fact, no other is ſo neceſſary as this: nay, if it were as natural, or as convenient, for men to ſignify their meaning in many words, as in few, and to call every thing by its own name, as to expreſs ſome things figuratively, we might perhaps affirm, that no other verb is *neceſſary*, nor any other form of it, but the third perſon ſingular of the preſent of the indicative, *eſt*, *is*.

But with the bare neceſſaries of life the moſt needy ſavage is not contented; he aſpires after convenience, and has even a taſte for ornament. And, in framing language, as in every other work, all men are more or leſt actuated by the ſame motives; and, for the ſake of elegance, as well as of utility,

* 151.

ſub-

ſubſtitute one word for another, and croud the meaning of two or three into one; and ſometimes diverſify the ſame word with a number of inflections, ſo as to give it the power of expreſſing, without the aid of other words, a great variety of human thoughts. Theſe contrivances are more obſervable in Greek and Latin, than in the modern tongues, and in the verb more than in any other part of ſpeech. I have hitherto conſidered this attributive in its ſimpleſt, and moſt neceſſary form, as ſignifying pure affirmation. I now proceed to ſhow, how it comes to be more complex, by being applied to other purpoſes.

Some truths are eternal and unalterable; as, God is good; Virtue is praiſeworthy; The three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. To expreſs the affirmation contained in theſe, and the like propoſitions, the verb of exiſtence *is*, *eſt*, is alone ſufficient: for truths like theſe have no dependence on time, place, or perſon, but are at all times, and on all occaſions, invariably the ſame.

It may be ſaid, that the third perſon *plural* of this verb, *Sunt*, *Are*, is equally neceſſary with the third perſon ſingular; becauſe the ſubject of a propoſition may be *many*, as well as *one*. And it is true, that, in all the languages we know, cuſtom has made this third perſon plural neceſſary, by determining,

ing, that the verb ſhall agree in number with its nominative. But if cuſtom had determined otherwiſe, we might have done without it. If I were to ſay, "Health, "peace, and a good name, *is* deſirable;" there would be a fault in the ſyntax, but nobody could be at a loſs to know my meaning: and, if cuſtom had not ſubjoined a plural verb to a plural nominative, or to two or more ſingular nominatives, there would have been no fault in the ſyntax. For, in old Engliſh, a verb ſingular ſometimes follows a plural nominative; as in the following couplet from Shakſpeare's *Venus and Adonis*,

She lifts the coffer-lids that cloſe his eyes,
Where lo, two *lamps* burnt out in darkneſs *lies*.

The ſame idiom prevails in the Scotch acts of parliament, in the vernacular writings of Scotch men prior to the laſt century, and in the vulgar dialect of North Britain to this day: and, even in England, the common people frequently ſpeak in this manner, without being miſunderſtood. Nay in Greek, which ſome affirm to be the moſt perfect of all languages; and in the Greek of Attica, which is allowed to be the moſt elegant dialect, the nominative plural of a noun of the neuter gender, and ſometimes even of maſculine and feminine nouns, is followed by the third perſon ſingular of the verb. And that, if the laws of the lan-

guage had permitted, the ſame thing might have obtained without inconvenience in all caſes whatever, will not, I think, be denied by any perſon who conſiders the matter impartially.

But innumerable affirmations there are, which have a neceſſary connection with *time*. That may be true now, which was not true yeſterday, and will not be true tomorrow. I may affirm concerning actions, that *have been performed*, or that *are now performing*, or that *will be performed hereafter*. Hence it would appear, that in a verb there muſt be ſome contrivance for expreſſing *time*.— I believe, however, it might be poſſible to frame a language, wherein paſt, preſent, and future time, as connected with affirmation, ſhould be expreſſed by adverbs, or other auxiliary words: but this would make ſpeech very unwieldy; and in fact we have no reaſon to think, that there is ſuch a language on earth. If therefore we conſider ſpeech, not as it *might be*, but as it *is*, we muſt enlarge the definition of a verb formerly given; and call it, "A word, neceſſary in every "ſentence, and ſignifying affirmation (or "aſſertion) with time." According to this idea, we may, by means of the verb alone, and without having recourſe to auxiliary words, affirm, or aſſert, not only what *is*, but alſo what *was*, and what *will be*.

Moreover,

Moreover, affirmations often have a connection with *perſons*, as well as with time. I may affirm ſomething concerning a quality, which belongs, or did belong, or will belong, to *me*, to *you*, or to *another*. *I am* reading; *you are* hearing; *he is* attentive: *I ſpoke*; *ye were* told; *he was* ignorant: *I ſhall write*; *you will be* undeceived; *he will be* thankful. This might be done, and often is, by prefixing to the verb the name of the perſon or perſons ſpoken of. But I may have occaſion to affirm concerning the qualities of a perſon whoſe name I know not: and if, in ſpeaking of myſelf, I were to uſe my own proper name prefixed to the verb, it would not be known in many caſes, to the hearer, whether I were ſpeaking of myſelf, or of ſome other perſon of the ſame name. In a word, the ſame reaſons, that prove the expediency of uſing pronouns inſtead of proper names, will alſo prove the neceſſity or propriety, of contriving the verb ſo as that it may expreſs three perſons; the firſt perſon, when one affirms any thing concerning one's ſelf; *I am*; the ſecond, when one affirms concerning the perſon to whom one ſpeaks, *thou art*; the third, when one affirms concerning another, *he is*.

This *might* be effected by the ſimple contrivance of prefixing the perſonal pronouns to the verb, without any variation of the verb itſelf. For, though the Latins ſay, *nos ſumus*,

vos eſtis, *illi ſunt*; giving to each perſon a different form of the verb; we expreſs ourſelves as *intelligibly*, when in Engliſh we ſay, *we are*, *ye are*, *they are*. And if this is intelligible in the plural, it muſt have been equally ſo in the ſingular, if cuſtom had permitted us to ſay, *I am*, *thou am*, *he am*; or *I is*, *thou is*, *he is*. In fact, *I is*, or *Iſe*, inſtead of *I am*, is frequent in Yorkſhire; and by illiterate people the pronoun of the firſt perſon is often coupled with the verb of the third, as *I thinks*, *I goes*; nay, *ſays I* may be met with in good Engliſh authors, as well as in common converſation. From all which we may infer (theſe barbariſms being equally intelligible with the Grammatical phraſes) that different inflections of the verb are not *neceſſary* to expreſs the different perſons. Yet, in all the known languages, different inflections of the verb are uſed, more ſparingly in Engliſh than in moſt other European tongues, and in Greek and Latin with very great variety; which, as will be obſerved hereafter, is one chief cauſe of the ſuperior elegance and harmony of theſe languages.

As affirmations may be made concerning *one* perſon, or concerning *more than one*, it is obvious, that the verb muſt expreſs *number* as wells as *perſon*: *Sumus*, *we are*, being as neceſſary in language as *Sum*, *I am*. But if the plural pronoun be prefixed, a change in the verb, however elegant, is not *neceſſary* for

for expreſſing number. For in the Engliſh conjunctive mood, we ſay, without any ambiguity, *if I go, if thou go, if he go, if we go, if ye go, if they go.* And if this be done in one mood, without inconvenience, it might be done in another. Cuſtom alone would ſoon render, *We am, ye am, they am*, as expreſſive as *we are, ye are, they are.*

Our idea of a verb, thus enlarged, will give riſe to the following definition. "A verb is "a word, neceſſary in every ſentence, ſig- "nifying affirmation, or aſſertion, with the "deſignation of time, perſon, and num- "ber."

But, if we conſider language, not as it might be in its rude ſtate, but as it has been actually improved in many, and perhaps in all nations, we ſhall ſoon be ſatisfied, that we have not yet completed the idea of a verb. In fact, the definition now given expreſſes only the nature of that verb, which the Latins call *ſubſtantive*, Sum, Fio, Forem, Exiſto, and the Greeks *the verb of exiſtence*, * *eimi*, *ginomai*, *pelomai*, *tunchanô*, *huparchô*.

As our thoughts ſhift with great rapidity, it ſeems natural, that thoſe, who would by adequate utterance do juſtice to what they think, ſhould rather ſhorten, than lengthen their expreſſion. Hence, in moſt languages, the words that are in continual uſe, as per-

* Ειμι, γινομαι, πελομαι, τυγχανω, ὑπαρχω.

ſonal pronouns, articles, and the moſt common connectives, are generally ſhort. Hence, too, that tendency which we have in converſation, to join two words in one, as *dont* for *do not*, *ſhant* for *ſhall not*, *ant* for *are not*, *int* for *is not*. And hence thoſe multitudes of elliptical phraſes to be found in every language. It needs not then ſeem wonderful, that men ſhould expreſs two or more meanings by one word, when that can be done conveniently.

Now ſome meanings more eaſily coaleſce than others. Between the attribute which is affirmed to belong to any ſubſtance, and the affirmation itſelf, there is a very cloſe affinity; and we naturally comprehend both in one word, and ſay, I *go*, inſtead of I *am going*; He *ſpoke*, inſtead of he *was ſpeaking*.

And thus our idea of the verb is completed. And we may now define it, "A "word, neceſſary in every ſentence, ſignify-"ing the *affirmation* of ſome *attribute*, toge-"ther with the deſignation of *time*, *number*, "and *perſon*."—Thus *lego*, *I read*, expreſſes the attribute *reading*, and *affirms* that attribute to belong, at the preſent *time*, to *one perſon*, which perſon is *myſelf*. So that this word *lego*, when analyſed, is found to comprehend theſe five meanings; *I*, the *perſon*, and *one* perſon; *am*, the *affirmation*; *now*, the *time*; and *reading*, the *attribute*: which all together form a compleat propoſition, including

cluding a ſubject, a predicate, and a copula, and withal intimating unity of perſon, and preſent time.

But the verbs of all languages are not quite ſo complex: and the foregoing definition is applicable, rather to Greek and Latin verbs, than to thoſe of our modern tongues. In Engliſh, the perſon muſt always be joined to the verb, in the form either of a noun or of a pronoun: for *read*, *readeſt*, *reads*, do not, like *lego*, *legis*, *legit*, form a ſentence, without their reſpective pronouns, or nominatives, *I read*, *thou readeſt*, *he reads*, or *Alexander reads*. In Engliſh verbs, too, time paſt is frequently, and time future always, expreſſed by auxiliary words, as *ſhall*, *will*, *have*, *had*, *was*, *did*, &c; whereas in Latin, and ſome other tongues, theſe varieties of time are ſignified by the inflections of the verb, *leget*, *legebat*, *legerat*, &c. In like manner, thoſe changes in the *manner* of affirmation, which give riſe to what Grammarians call the *modes* or *moods* of verbs, are ſignified in Engliſh by auxiliary words; but in ſome languages are expreſſed by varying the form of the verb. Thus *legiſſet* in Latin is in Engliſh *he might have read*; the perſon being expreſſed by the pronoun *he*; the mood, by the auxiliary *might*; the time, by *might*, *have*, and *read*, conjunctly; and the attribute, by the participle *read*.—Is it not ſelf-evident, that thoſe tongues which compre-

hend ſo much meaning in their verbs, muſt be more expreſſive and harmonious, than thoſe that are forced to have recourſe to ſo many auxiliaries?

Auxiliary words, however, are not unknown either in the Latin verb, or in the Greek. In the paſſive of the former, the *indicative* perfect and pluſquamperfect, and the *ſubjunctive* perfect, pluſquamperfect, and future, are inflected by means of the verb of exiſtence, and the participle of time paſt, as *amatus eram*, *amatus fuero*, &c. And in the perfect and pluſquamperfect of the *ſubjunctive* and *optative* of the Greek paſſive verbs, there is a ſimilar contrivance.

But in our modern verbs and nouns the variety of auxiliary words is much greater. For the northern nations, who overturned the Roman empire, and eſtabliſhed themſelves in the conquered provinces, being an unlettered race of men, would not take the trouble either to impart their own language to the Romans, or to learn theirs with any degree of exactneſs: but, blending words and idioms of their own with Latin words inaccurately acquired, or imperfectly remembered, and finding it too great a labour to maſter all the inflections of that language, fell upon a ſimpler, though leſs elegant, artifice, of ſupplying the place of caſes, moods, and tenſes, with one or more auxiliary words, joined to nouns, verbs, and participles. And

hence,

hence, in the Italian, Spaniſh, Portugueſe, and French languages, the greater part of the words are Latin (for the conquered were more in number than the conquerors); but ſo diſguiſed are thoſe words, by the mixture of northern idioms, and by the ſlovenly expedient now hinted at, as to have become at once like the Latin, and very different from it.—The antient Greek, compared with the modern, is found to have undergone alterations ſomewhat ſimilar, but not ſo great. For with the northern invaders the Greeks were never ſo thoroughly incorporated, as were the Europeans of the weſt: and, when conquered by the Turks, they maintained their religion, and ſo preſerved their language from total depravation, though they could not prevent its debaſement.

On many topicks, it is eaſier to propoſe than to ſolve difficulties, and to aſk queſtions than to anſwer them. What is hinted in the laſt paragraph may be thought to account for the multitude of auxiliary words that belong to the verbs and nouns of modern Europe. But, for the multitude of *Inflections*, that are found in the nouns and verbs of the antient languages, how are we to account? Why did not the Greeks and Romans abound in auxiliary words as much as we?

Was it, becauſe their languages, like regular towns and fortifications, were *made* by men of learning; who planned them before they

they exiſted, with a view to the renown of the poets, philoſophers, and orators, who were to compoſe in them, as well as to the convenience of the people, who were to ſpeak them: while the modern tongues, like poor villages that extend their bounds irregularly, are the rude work of a barbarous people, who, without looking before or behind them, on the right hand, or on the left, threw their coarſe materials together, with no other view, than juſt to anſwer the exigency of the preſent hour?—This theory is agreeable to the ideas of ſome learned authors: but, if we pay any regard to hiſtory, or believe that human exertions are proportioned to human abilities, and that the Greeks and Romans were like other men, we cannot acquieſce in it.

They who firſt ſpoke Greek and Latin were certainly not leſs ignorant, nor leſs ſavage, than were thoſe moderns, among whom aroſe the Italian, the Spaniſh, the French, and the Engliſh languages. If theſe laſt were formed gradually, and without plan or method, why ſhould we believe, that the Claſſick tongues were otherwiſe formed? Are they more regular than the modern? In ſome reſpects they may be ſo; and it is allowed, and will be proved in the ſequel, that they are more elegant: for, of two towns that are built without a plan, it is not difficult to imagine, that the one may be more convenient

venient and more beautiful than the other. But every polite tongue has its own rules; and the Engliſh, that is according to rule, is not leſs regular than the Greek that is according to rule; and a deviation from the eſtabliſhed uſe of the language is as much an irregularity in the one as in the other: nor are the modes of the Greek tongue more uniform in Xenophon and Plato, or of the Latin in Cicero and Ceſar, than thoſe of the Engliſh are in Addiſon and Swift, or thoſe of the French in Rollin, Vertot, and Fenelon.

But why ſhould the inflections of language be conſidered as a proof of refinement and art, and the ſubſtitution of auxiliary words as the work of chance and of barbariſm? Nay, what evidence can be brought to ſhow, that the inflections of the Claſſick tongues were not originally formed out of obſolete auxiliary words prefixed, or ſubjoined, to nouns and verbs, or otherwiſe incorporated with their radical letters? Some learned men are of opinion, that this was actually the caſe. And though the matter does not now admit of a direct proof, the analogy of other languages, antient as well as modern, gives plauſibility to the conjecture.

The inflections of Hebrew nouns and verbs may upon this principle be accounted for. The caſes of the former are marked by a change made in the beginning of the word; and

and this change is nothing more than a contracted prepoſition prefixed, anſwering to the Engliſh *of*, *to*, *from*: as if, inſtead of *animal*, *of animal*, *to animal*, *from animal*, we were to pronounce and write *animal*, *fanimal*, *tanimal*, *franimal*; which, if we were accuſtomed to ſpeak ſo, would be as intelligible to us, as *animal*, *animalis*, *animali*, were to the Romans.—Of the Hebrew verb, in like manner, the perſons are marked by contracted pronouns ſubjoined or prefixed to the radical letters. Thus, *maſar*, he delivered; *maſartha*, thou deliveredſt, from *maſar* the root, and *atha*, thou; *maſarthi*, I delivered, from *maſar*, and *aothi*, me, &c. And in Erſe, a very antient ſpecies of Celtick, moſt of the inflections of the nouns and verbs may, if I am not miſinformed, be analyſed in a way ſomewhat ſimilar.

If the Engliſh, and other modern tongues, had been ſpoken for ages before they were written (which we have reaſon to think was the caſe with the Greek and Latin) it is probable, that many of our auxiliaries would have been ſhortened and ſoftened, and at length incorporated with the radical words, ſo as to aſſume the form of initial or final inflections. For it is while they are only ſpoken, and not written, that languages are moſt liable to alterations of this kind; as they become in ſome degree ſtationary from the moment they begin to be viſible in writ-

ing. But we know, that writing was practiſed in many, and perhaps in moſt European nations, previouſly to the very exiſtence of the modern languages: from which we may infer, that attempts would be made to write thoſe languages almoſt as ſoon as to ſpeak them. And if thus our auxiliary words were kept diſtinct in the beginning, and marked as ſuch by our firſt writers, it is no wonder that they ſhould have remained diſtinct ever ſince.

Had the Greek and Latin tongues been aſcertained by writing at as early a period of their exiſtence, their fate would perhaps have been ſimilar: and their inflections might now, like thoſe of the Hebrew, have been eaſily analyſed, and found to be auxiliary words ſhortened and ſoftened by colloquial uſe, and gradually incorporated with the radical part of the original nouns and verbs. But it was the misfortune of the modern languages (if it can be called a misfortune) that their form was in ſome meaſure fixed, before it became ſo complete as it might have been; that, without paſſing through the intermediate ſtages of childhood and youth, they roſe at once (if I may ſo ſpeak) from infancy to premature manhood: and in regard to the Claſſick tongues it was a lucky circumſtance, that their growth advanced more gradually, and that their form was not eſtabliſhed by writing, till after it had

had been variouſly rounded and moulded by the caſual pronunciation of ſucceſſive ages. Hence, if there be any truth in theſe conjectures (for they lay claim to no higher character) it will follow, that the Greek and Latin tongues are for this reaſon peculiarly elegant, becauſe they who firſt ſpoke them were long in a ſavage ſtate; and that the modern languages are for this reaſon leſs elegant, becauſe the nations among whom they took their riſe were not ſavage. This looks very like a paradox. And yet, is it not more probable, than any thing which can be advanced in favour of that contrary ſuppoſition, adopted by ſome learned men, that the Claſſick tongues were planned by philoſophers, and the modern languages jumbled rudely into form by barbarians?

Before I proceed, it may be proper to obſerve, that ſeveral definitions of the verb have been admitted by Grammarians, different from that which I have given, and ſome of them perhaps equally good.—Some have defined it thus: "A verb is a word, which "forms, when joined to a noun, a complete "ſentence." This is certainly true of the verb, and of no other part of ſpeech; but does not ſufficiently expreſs its character, as proceeding from an operation of the mind.—Others have ſaid, that a verb is "a word "ſignifying *to be*, *to do*, and *to ſuffer*." And true it is, that moſt of thoſe attributives, which

which have a connection with perſons and times, may be referred to one or other of theſe three claſſes. But this definition does not mark the difference between the verb and the participle; becauſe it omits the affirmation, which is the verb's moſt eſſential character.—Ruddiman has very well expreſſed the nature of a Latin verb, in theſe words, "Verbum eſt pars orationis variabilis, aliquid "de aliqua re dici ſeu affirmari ſignificans." "A verb is a variable part of ſpeech, ſigni- "fying, that ſome affirmation or aſſertion "is made concerning ſome thing."—Ariſtotle ſays * *Rhêma eſti to proſſêmainon chronon*: "A verb is that which ſignifies time, toge- "ther with ſome other ſignification." But this appears to me to be very inaccurate: for it neither diſtinguiſhes the participle from the verb; nor takes any notice of the attribute or of the affirmation, both which belong eſſentially to all verbs whatever. Nay, according to this definition, certain adverbs, as *diu*, *heri*, *nudiuſtertius*, *cras*, *hodie*, &c. would be verbs; for they expreſs time, and withal ſignify, that the time is *long*, that it is limited to *yeſterday*, to *the day before yeſterday*, to *tomorrow*, to the *preſent day*, &c.—Buxtorff calls the verb Vox flexilis cum tempore et perſona, "a declinable word with "time and perſon," which likewiſe overlooks both the affirmation and the attribute.

* Ῥημα ἔστι το προσσημαίνον χρονον.

—Some

—Some grammarians have ſaid, that "a verb "is a word ſignifying actions and paſſions." But *Sum, I am*, is a verb, and yet it ſignifies neither the one nor the other, neither acting, nor being acted upon: and *percutiens, ſtriking*, denotes action; and *vulneratus, wounded*, denotes *paſſion*, in the preſent ſenſe of the word; and yet both are participles.—Scaliger thought, that "things fixed, per-"manent, and laſting," are ſignified by nouns, and "things tranſient and tempo-"rary by verbs." But *hora, ventus, amnis, hour, wind, river*, ſignify things tranſient, and yet are nouns: and many verbs there are, which denote permanency, as *ſedet, ſtat, eſt, habitat, dormit, obiit*; *he ſits, he ſtands, he is, he dwells, he ſleeps, he died*, or *ceaſed* to live.

SECT. III.

The ſubject continued. Of the Times or Tenſes of verbs. Tenſes, 1. *Definite in time.*—2. *Indefinite in time, or Aoriſt.*—3. *Complete, or Perfect, in reſpect of action.*—4. *Incomplete, or Imperfect, in reſpect of action.*—5. *Compound, uniting two or more times in one.*—6. *Simple, expreſſive of one time only.*—*Remarks.*

I Hinted, that the attributes, which have a connection with number and perſon, and may be made the ſubjects of affirmation, are reducible to one or other of theſe three heads, *to be*, *to act*, and *to be acted upon*; to which may be added a fourth, *to reſt*, or *ceaſe*, which however may perhaps be implied in the firſt. Verbs, therefore, there muſt be in all languages, to expreſs, firſt, *Being*, as Sum, I am; ſecondly, *Acting*, as Vulnero, I wound; thirdly, *Being acted upon*, as Vulneror, I am wounded; and fourthly, *Being at reſt*, as Dormio, I ſleep, Sedeo, I ſit.

Now, without ſome reference to *Time*, not one of theſe attributes can be conceived. For wherever there is *exiſtence*, it muſt continue for ſome time, how ſhort ſoever that time may be: and whatever exiſtence we ſpeak of, we muſt conſider, as paſt (he *was*),

as preſent (he *is*), or as future (he *will be*); or as both paſt and preſent (he *was* and *is*); or as both preſent and future (he *is* and *will* be); or as extending through time future, as well as through that which is preſent and paſt, as, he *was*, he *is*, and he *will continue* to be.—Further, wherever there is *action* either *exerted* or *received*, there muſt be *motion*; and all motion implies *time*. For when *many* contiguous places are gone through in a given time, the motion is ſwift; and when *few* contiguous places are gone through in the ſame time, the motion is ſlow.—*Reſt*, in like manner, implies duration: for if the want of motion did not continue for ſome time, we ſhould not know, that there was reſt.

Time, therefore, muſt make a part of the ſignification of all verbs, and of every part of every verb, in all languages whatever. And this leads me to ſpeak more particularly of the *Times* of verbs, which in Engliſh are improperly called the *Tenſes*; a word, whoſe *apparent* etymology would never lead us even to gueſs at its meaning; and which, if it were not explained to us, we ſhould not think of conſidering as a corruption of the Latin *tempus*, or of the French *temps*.

Time is naturally divided into Paſt, Preſent, and Future. All paſt time was once preſent, and all future time will come at laſt to be preſent. If therefore we deny the reality

reality of preſent time, as ſeveral philoſophers both antient and modern have done, we muſt alſo deny the reality of paſt and future time, and, conſequently, of time altogether. Nay more: Senſe perceives nothing but what is preſent, Memory nothing but what is paſt, and Foreſight forms conjectures in regard to futurity. If, therefore, we ſay, that there is no preſent time, nor conſequently any future or paſt time, it will follow, that there are no ſuch faculties in man, as ſenſe, memory, and foreſight.

The fundamental error in the reaſonings of theſe philoſophers, on the ſubject of time, is, that they ſuppoſe the preſent inſtant to have, like a geometrical point, neither parts nor magnitude; and that it is nothing more than the commencement of time future, and the concluſion of time paſt; even as the point, in which two right lines meet and form an angle, being itſelf of no magnitude, muſt be conſidered as the beginning of the one line, and the end of the other.

But, as nothing is, in reſpect of our ſenſes, a geometrical point, (for whatever we ſee, or touch, muſt of neceſſity have magnitude) ſo neither is the preſent, or any other, inſtant of duration, wholly unextended. Nay, we cannot even conceive an unextended inſtant: and that which we call the *preſent* may in fact admit of very conſiderable extenſion.—While I write a letter, or read a book, I ſay,

that I *am* reading or writing it, though it ſhould take up an hour, a day, a week, or a month; the whole time being conſidered as preſent, which is employed in the preſent action. So, while I build a houſe, though that ſhould be the work of many months, I ſpeak of it in the preſent time, and ſay that I *am building* it. In like manner, in contradiſtinction to the century paſt, and to that which is to come, we may conſider the whole ſpace of a hundred years as time preſent, when we ſpeak of a ſeries of actions, or of a ſtate of exiſtence, that is co-extended with it; as in the following example: "In this "century, *we are* more neglectful of the an-"tients, and *we are* conſequently more igno-"rant, than they *were* in the laſt, or than "perhaps they *will be* in the next." Nay the entire term of man's probationary ſtate in this world, when oppoſed to that eternity which is before him, is conſidered as preſent time by thoſe who ſay, "In this ſtate *we ſee* "darkly as through a glaſs; but in a future "life our faith *will be* loſt in viſion, and *we* "*ſhall know*, even as we are known."

Time paſt, and time future, are, in themſelves *infinitely*, and, with reſpect to man, *indefinitely* extended: and, in ſpeaking of time paſt, or of time future, men may have occaſion to allude to different periods or extenſions of paſt or future time. And hence, in all the European languages we know, and probably

probably in many other languages, there are in verbs ſeveral preterites and futures. Thus, in Engliſh, *I did it, I was doing it, I have done it, I had done it,* are plainly diſtinct preterites: and *I ſhall do it, I ſhall be doing it, I am about to do it, I ſhall have done it,* convey different ideas in regard to the tranſactions of future time.

But, in deſcribing the neceſſary *times* or *tenſes* of verbs, which is a curious part of ſcience, and the moſt difficult thing, perhaps, in the grammatical art, I muſt be ſomewhat more particular.

As the verbs, that ſignify *to act* and *to be acted upon*, are of all verbs the moſt complex, and muſt therefore have as great a variety of tenſes as any other verbs can have, I ſhall confine myſelf to them in the following analyſis of the tenſes. And when I have diſtributed the tenſes of active verbs into their ſeveral claſſes, and explained the nature of each, the ſubject may be preſumed to be ſufficiently illuſtrated.

The firſt attempt that was made in this nation, ſo far as I know, towards a philoſophical analyſis of the tenſes, may be ſeen in a grammar publiſhed in Queen Anne's time, and recommended by the *Tatler*, which is commonly called Steele's Grammar. It is in ſome reſpects more complete, than any other grammar of the Engliſh tongue that I have

met with; and discovers a precision and an acuteness not to be found in the other writings of Sir Richard Steele; whence I am inclined to think it is not his. Indeed, from the variety of style and matter, as well as from the Dedication to the Queen, which is subscribed *The Authors*, it would seem to have been the work of several hands.—About twenty years after, Doctor Clarke, in his very learned notes on Homer's Iliad, proposed an arrangement of the tenses; which, though imperfect, is ingenious, and did certainly throw light upon the subject.—Mr. Harris, in his Hermes, published in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty one, gave a more complete account of the tenses, than any preceeding grammarian. His theory has however been objected to, in many particulars, by the author of a late work *On the origin and progress of language*; who has framed a new one, and a better, which he illustrates with great learning, and grammatical skill.—I have looked into all these authors; but, though I have received useful information from each, especially from the last, I am not perfectly satisfied with any one of them. As there is something peculiar in each of their schemes, so is there in that which follows. The truth is, that this is a subject of great nicety; and, being withal very complex, it is no wonder that it should appear in different lights to different persons. That I should think favourably of my own theory,

theory, is natural; but it would be arrogance in me to preſume, that others will look upon it with equal partiality.

It is impoſſible to analyſe the Tenſes, without continual reference to ſome one language or other. If we take our ideas of them from the Greek and the Latin, we ſhall be inclined to think, that nine tenſes, or ten, or perhaps more, may be uſeful, or even neceſſary, in language. But if we were to judge of them according to the rules of ſome other tongues, we ſhould greatly reduce their number: no more than two, the *paſt* and the *future*, being acknowledged by the Hebrew grammarian. This ought to be kept in mind, that we may not multiply tenſes without neceſſity: at the ſame time let it not be forgotten, that, without reaſoning from the analogy of the Greek and the Latin, one could not do juſtice to the ſubject; thoſe being of all known languages the beſt cultivated, and the moſt comprehenſive. Beſides, in a ſpeculation of this nature, redundance is leſs faulty than defect. The more minutely we diſcriminate the tenſes, the more clearly we ſhall ſee from what modifications of human thought they derive their origin.

Some will not allow any thing to be a tenſe, but what in one inflected word expreſſes an affirmation with time: for that thoſe parts of the verb are not properly called tenſes, which aſſume that appearance by

means of auxiliary words. At this rate, in Engliſh, we ſhould have two tenſes only, the *preſent* and the *paſt*, in the active verb, and in the paſſive no tenſes at all. But this is a needleſs nicety, and, if adopted, would introduce confuſion into the Grammatical art. If *amaveram* be a tenſe, why ſhould not *amatus fueram?* If *I heard* be a tenſe, *I did hear*, *I have heard*, and *I ſhall hear*, muſt be equally entitled to that appellation.

The Tenſes of Active verbs I divide, firſt, in reſpect of *time*, into *Definite* and *Indefinite*. Thoſe parts of the verb that expreſs time indefinitely may be called *Aoriſts*. The word is Greek, and ſignifies *indefinite*: but the forms of the verb denoted by it are not peculiar to the Greek tongue, but muſt be in all languages, whether Grammarians take notice of them or not. And though, in the Greek Grammar, two *aoriſts only of paſt time* are mentioned, it will appear, that there may be, and in moſt languages probably are, aoriſts of the future, and even of the preſent, as well as of the paſt.

I. 1. When I ſay, *I read*, or *I am reading*, I expreſs preſent time *definitely*: for what I affirm of myſelf holds true at this preſent moment, but perhaps will not be true the next, and certainly was not true an hour ago, when I was aſleep. But when I ſay, "A merry heart *maketh* a chearful "countenance," I expreſs what is always true,

true, what is not limited to any definite time, and what may be ſaid at any period of preſent time: that is, in pronouncing this maxim, I uſe the preſent tenſe, but I ſpeak of preſent time in general, or indefinitely; or, in other words, I uſe an *aoriſt of the preſent*. In all general aſſertions of this nature, expreſſed by preſent time, the tenſe is the ſame: as, Manners *make* the man; The merciful man *regardeth* the life of his beaſt; The tender mercies of the wicked *are* cruel; A wiſe ſon *maketh* a glad father; Grande dolori ingenium *eſt*; Two and two *are* four, &c. And as all men muſt occaſionally ſpeak in this manner, every cultivated language muſt have a ſimilar contrivance; though there may be, and certainly are, many languages, in which the verb aſſumes no particular form in order to expreſs it; I mean, no form different from the definite preſent. How then, you will ſay, is it known? I anſwer, By the ſenſe of the words. If a verb of the preſent tenſe expreſs time indefinitely, that tenſe is truly an aoriſt of the preſent, whatever be its form or termination.

The Hebrews, whoſe verbs have no preſent, expreſs the meaning of this tenſe by the future. They who ſpeak Erſe do ſo too, though that language has a preſent. And in fact we often do the ſame, without ambiguity, or any awkward deviation from the

idiom of the Engliſh tongue. We may ſay, A prudent man *conſiders* before he acts, or, A prudent man *will conſider* before he act: A wiſe ſon *maketh* a glad father, or, A wiſe ſon *will make* a glad father. Theſe and the like expreſſions are equally connected with the preſent and with the future. We are not ſuppoſed to exclude the future, when we affirm their truth with reſpect to preſent time: and if the law of the language required that we ſhould *always* expreſs them in future time, we ſhould not be underſtood to exclude the preſent, even in ſentences like the following; Two and two *will be* four, Virtue *will be* praiſeworthy, Honeſty *will be* the beſt policy.

The other preſent, called here the Definite preſent, and exemplified by *Lego, I read*, is, in Hebrew, ſupplied, ſometimes by other tenſes, but, moſt commonly, by a preſent participle active (called *Benoni* *); and, in particular caſes,

* This participle ſerves other purpoſes. It is ſometimes a verbal noun. Thus *moſer* is not only *tradens*, but alſo *traditor*: *ſhofet* is both *judicans* and *judex*. *Shofetim*, the plural of the latter, is the title of that book which we call *Judges*. The name is no doubt the ſame with that given by Latin authors to the chief magiſtrates of Carthage, Suffetes. See Liv. xxviii. 37. The Hebrew, the language of Canaan, as Iſaiah calls it, and that of the Phenicians, of whom the Carthaginians were a colony, were originally the ſame, with perhaps ſome difference of dialect. But the Romans, like the Ephraimites, could not pronounce the letter *Schin*, and therefore turned it into S, adding, as was uſual with them, a termination from

caſes, by an impersonal *iſh*, signifying *there is*, or *it is*, which always has the import of the preſent, and ſuits equally all persons, genders, and numbers. So that, though in Hebrew verbs there is, properly ſpeaking, no preſent tenſe, yet there are in the language ſeveral contrivances that anſwer the ſame purpoſe. *Affirmation with reſpect to preſent time* is indeed ſo neceſſary in all nations, that we cannot well conceive how any language ſhould be unprovided of the means of expreſſing it.

I. 2. Secondly, when I ſay, *Scribam*, * *Grapſō*, *I ſhall write*, I utter a promiſe, in which future time is expreſſed indefinitely; for I do not allot the action of writing to any particular or definite part of time future. This, therefore, is an aoriſt of the future.—But when I ſay, *Scripturus ſum*, † *mellō graphein*, *I am about to write*, or *I am going to write*, I expreſs future time *definitely*, or without an aoriſt: for the meaning is, that

from their own language.—Sometimes in the New Teſtament we find the preſent participle active uſed in the ſame way. Thus ὁ πειραζων is *the tempter*, and ὁ βαπτιζων *the Baptiſt*.—*Benoni*, the name of the active preſent participle, ſignifies *intermediate*: and the participle is ſo called, perhaps, becauſe it comes as it were between the two Hebrew tenſes, the paſt and the future. It is ſpelled differently from the name *Benoni*, which Rachel when dying gave her new-born ſon, (Geneſ. xxxv. 18); though when expreſſed by Roman characters they appear the ſame.

* γραψω. † μελλω γραφειν.

I ſhall

I ſhall write immediately, or ſoon, after making the declaration. And this is, by moſt Grammarians, allowed to have been the import of that *paulo-poſt-futurum*, which is found in the paſſive verbs of the Greeks; where ‡ *tupht hêſomai* ſignifies, indefinitely, or by the aoriſt, *I ſhall be beaten*; but ‖ *tetupſomai*, the paulo-poſt-future, denotes, I ſhall be *immediately* beaten, or I am about to be beaten. This, both in Latin and Engliſh, we expreſs by means of an auxiliary word or two, *Sum ſcripturus*, *I am about to write*: of which it is remarkable, that the auxiliary verb *ſum*, *I am*, points at preſent time; while the participle *ſcripturus*, *about to write*, implies future time; whence we gather, that this form of the verb ſignifies time future joined to time preſent, or, in other words, that the futurity ſpoken of is preſently to commence.—The Hebrews have no paulo-poſt-future; but by joining to their future ſuch adverbs as *quickly*, *immediately*, *ſoon*, &c. they eaſily expreſs the meaning. The ſame thing may, I ſuppoſe, be done in all other languages. Conſequently, the paulo-poſt-future is not a neceſſary tenſe.

As general maxims may be ſignified by the aoriſt of the preſent, ſo the aoriſt of the future is often uſed in legiſlative ſentences:—Thou *ſhalt* not kill, Thou *ſhalt* not ſteal; in which it is obvious, that no particular period of future time is meant,

‡ τυφθησομαι. ‖ τετυψομαι.

but

but future time indefinitely, * *aoriſtôs*, or in general. It is thy duty, *at all times*, and on *all occaſions*, to abſtain from theft and from murder. Here again we ſee a co-incidence of the future with the preſent. By a change of the phraſe, every precept of this ſort may be referred to preſent time: *It is* thy duty not to kill; *It is* thy duty not to ſteal: or, *I command* thee not to kill; *I forbid* thee to ſteal, &c.—The Preſent, though it cannot be called a part of the Future, is however an introduction to it. But the Future and the Paſt are of no kindred; and, being ſeparated by the Preſent, can never be contiguous.

I. 3. That there is an *aoriſt of the paſt*, is eaſily proved. The Greek verbs, and the Engliſh too, have a particular form to expreſs it, without the aid of auxiliary words. † *Egrapſa*, *I wrote*, or *I did write*, denotes, that the action of writing is *paſt*, but refers to no particular period of paſt time. When I ſay, "He *ſent* me a letter, and I *anſwered* "it," both *ſent* and *anſwered* are aoriſts, and point at paſt time indefinitely: the letters ſpoken of may, for any thing that appears in the ſentence, have been written and ſent a year ago, or twenty years ago, or laſt ſummer, or laſt week, or yeſterday; for the tenſes refer to no one portion of paſt time more than another.—But if I ſay, "He ſent

* Αοριςως. † Εγραψα.

"me

" me a letter, and I *have answered* it," the verb *he sent* is an aoriſt; but *I have answered* is not an aoriſt; for it points at paſt time more definitely, and means, that I anſwered it *juſt now*, or *lately*.—It is worth while to attend to this auxiliary verb, by which we expreſs *definite paſt time*; I *have anſwered*; *I have*, being the preſent tenſe, points at time preſent; and *anſwered*, being the participle of the paſt, refers to time paſt: whence we infer, that the time expreſſed by theſe words, *I have anſwered*, is a mixture of the preſent with the paſt, or rather, *the paſt terminating in or near the preſent*. And that this is the true character of the tenſe in queſtion, will appear more clearly by and by.

We ſee then, that verbs expreſs not only Preſent, Paſt, and Future time; but alſo time paſt, preſent, and future, either, firſt, *indefinitely*, that is, by aoriſts, or, ſecondly, *definitely*.

But obſerve, that the Engliſh auxiliary *have* is not always definite, even when joined to the preterite participle. " I *have heard* it " ſaid, I know not when, or by whom, that " Charles the ſecond on his death-bed " declared himſelf a papiſt." Here the words *I have heard*, are ſo far from being definite in regard to time, that they may allude to a fact which happened ten, twenty, thirty years ago, or not one year ago, or to

a fact of which no body knows when it happened.

Obſerve, further, that, in order to define or aſcertain time exactly, the verb alone, even in the definite tenſes, is not ſufficient, but muſt be illuſtrated by adverbs, or other words ſignificant of exact time. For our notions in regard to the extent of time vary according to the nature of the actions ſpoken of: and if theſe be important, or of long continuance, or not uſual, we are apt to conſider the time, which precedes or follows them, as ſhort, becauſe they make a ſtrong impreſſion, and appear of great magnitude. A year after one's houſe is finiſhed, one may ſay, "I *have finiſhed* my houſe:" but "I "*have anſwered* Alexander's letter," is underſtood to have a ſhorter retroſpect; unleſs the writing of the letter was a work of great labour and time. In like manner, "I am "to build a houſe," may be ſaid a year before one begins to build; but, "I am to take a "walk," expreſſes a very near futurity. And therefore, as the expreſſion of time by verbs, eſpecially of time paſt and future, is rather relative than abſolute, adverbs, and other words, come to be neceſſary, when we would ſpeak with preciſion of paſt and future time. "I am *juſt going* to take a "walk;—I ſhall build a houſe *this ſum-*"*mer*;—I have *this moment* finiſhed my "letter," &c.

II. The

II. The tenſes of active verbs may be divided, ſecondly, *in reſpect of the mode of action* ſignified, into Perfect, which denote *complete action*, and Imperfect, which denote *incomplete action*.

A late author mentions another claſs of tenſes, which he calls *Indefinite*, and of which he ſays, that they denote action, but without ſpecifying, whether it be complete or incomplete. And, as an example, he gives the aoriſt of the paſt, * *Egrapſa*, *I wrote*, or *I did write*. But I cannot ſee, that there is any ground for this diviſion. No other grammarian, ſo far as I know, either antient or modern, has taken notice of it; while the diſtribution of tenſes into *perfect* and *imperfect* ſeems to be as old as grammar itſelf. And the learned Author, whom I allude to, affirms, that "in our grammatical "inquiries we cannot quit the footſteps of "the antients, without the greateſt hazard "of going wrong." This novelty, however, I reject, not becauſe it is new, but becauſe I do not underſtand it. I can conceive a complete action, that is, an action, which has had, or is to have, a beginning and an end: I can alſo conceive an incomplete action, that has had a beginning, but which is not, or is not ſaid to be, ended. But an action, which, though it muſt have had a beginning, is conſidered as neither ended nor continued, as

* Εγραψα.

neither

neither complete nor incomplete, I cannot conceive at all. When I ſay, "I wrote a "letter," the *paſt time* is *indefinite*, but a *complete action* is plainly ſignified: if the letter had not been finiſhed, "I was writing," would have been the proper tenſe. In like manner, "I wrote," though it does not imply, that the thing written, whether book or letter, was finiſhed, (for no particular writing is ſpeciſied) does yet ſignify, that the *act of writing* was both begun and ended. If it had not been *begun*, it could not be referred to paſt time; and if it had not been *ended*, or *diſcontinued*, (for theſe words applied to the ſimple act of writing are of the ſame import) it would have been ſtill going on; and the affirmation concerning it would be to this purpoſe, "I have been writing all the "morning, and am ſtill writing." — But, to return to the ſecond general diviſion of tenſes, into Perfect, denoting *complete action*, and Imperfect, which denote *incomplete action*.

II. 1. The aoriſt of the preſent may be ſaid to denote incomplete action. When I ſay, "A merry heart *maketh* a chearful "countenance," I expreſs by the word *maketh* an action, or operation, which is always *a doing*, and never can be ſaid to be *done* and *over*. For the time never yet was, ſince man was made, when gladneſs of heart did not diſplay itſelf in the countenance, and,

while human nature remains unaltered, the time will never come when it ſhall ceaſe to do ſo.

Further, the definite preſent, I mean the preſent that is definite in reſpect of time, does alſo denote incomplete action. While I am writing a letter, I ſay, *Scribo, I write,* or *I am writing*; which implies, that part of the writing is done, and that part of it is not done; that the action is begun, but not ended.

But the moment the writing is completed, I ſay, or I may ſay, "I have written;" in which are comprehended theſe three things. Firſt, that the action is *complete*; for which reaſon the tenſe is called *perfectum*, the perfect: a word, which, from the frequent uſe of it in our grammars, may ſuggeſt *to us* the idea of *paſt time*; but which in reality ſignifies *perfect* or *complete* action: for, that there is a *perfect* of the *future*, as well as of the *paſt*, will appear in the ſequel.—Secondly, the words "I have written" imply, that the action is not only complete, but alſo *paſt*; for which reaſon, the tenſe is called *preteritum perfectum*, the complete paſt, or the preterite perfect, or more briefly the *preterperfect*.—Thirdly, theſe words imply, that the action is *juſt now* completed, or *very lately*. From this relation of the preterperfect to preſent time, (for, as I already obſerved, it denotes paſt time ending in the preſent,

preſent, or near it,) the Stoicks, who were accurate grammarians, called it *the perfect or complete preſent*: but, as it denotes what *is done*, and, conſequently, *what is not now a-doing*, I think it better to call it by its ordinary name, the preterperfect.

For this tenſe the Greeks have a particular form * *gegrapha*; the Engliſh, and other moderns, expreſs it by an auxiliary verb joined to the participle, *I have written*. But it is remarkable, that for this tenſe the Latin verb has no particular inflection; for the ſame Latin word denotes both the preterperfect and the aoriſt of the paſt. *Scripſi*, for example, ſignifies, not only *I wrote*, or *I did write*, (referring to paſt time indefinitely) but alſo, *I have written*, referring to an action paſt and lately compleated. Hence ariſes a ſmall ambiguity in the uſe of the Latin verb, from which the verbs of many other languages are free. But, by means of adverbs, and other auxiliary words that hang looſely upon the ſyntax of language, this ambiguity in the Latin tongue may be prevented, wherever it is likely to prove inconvenient.

And here we learn to correct an error in ſome of the common grammars; where *amavi* is tranſlated *I have loved*; as if it were a true preterperfect, and nothing elſe, like the Greek † *pephilêka*: whereas it is both a pre-

* γεγραφα. † πεφιληκα.

terperfect, and an aoriſt of the paſt, anſwering both to *pephilêka*, and to * *ephilêſa*; and ſhould therefore be rendered, *I loved*, *I did love*, or *I have loved*. And children ſhould be taught, that, though theſe three Engliſh phraſes are here connected by the particle *or*, and are every one of them expreſſed by the Latin *amavi*, they are not of the ſame import; for that the laſt may ſometimes differ conſiderably in ſignification from the other two.—One miſtake leads to another. The imperfect *amabam* is in the common grammars rendered, *I loved or did love*; as if it were the aoriſt of the paſt, and the ſame with the Greek *ephilêſa*: whereas, ſo far as it is really the *imperfect*, it correſponds to the Greek † *ephiloun*, and, as will appear by and by, ought to have been tranſlated *I was loving*. I do not however affirm, that it is *never* an aoriſt of the paſt. But, in good authors, that is not its common uſe; and when it is, the tenſe loſes that character which entitles it to be called *imperfect*.

The Hebrews, having but one preterite, muſt confound, as the Latins do, the preterperfect with the aoriſt of the paſt, and make one word ſerve for both. When Job received the news of thoſe accumulated calamities, which at once diveſted him of all his property, and of every domeſtick comfort, he

* ἐφιλησα. † ἐφιλοῦν.

rent

rent his clothes, fell down upon the ground, and worſhipped; and, according to our tranſlation, ſaid, "The Lord gave, and the Lord "hath taken away: bleſſed be the name of "the Lord." Here, (as the learned Author of *the origin and progreſs of Language* obſerves) the two preterites are elegantly diſtinguiſhed; the firſt being the aoriſt, the other the preterperfect. "The Lord *gave*;" this happened formerly, but at what period of paſt time is not ſaid:—and, "the Lord *hath* "*taken* away;" this had juſt happened, or very lately, ſo that it might be ſaid to be felt at the preſent moment. In the Hebrew, the tenſe is in both clauſes the ſame: and the paſſage literally tranſlated would be, "The "Lord gave, and the Lord took away," or perhaps, "The Lord hath given, and the "Lord hath taken away." Job's meaning may, no doubt, be underſtood from theſe expreſſions; but ſeems to be more emphatically ſignified in our Engliſh bible, than by either of them, or even by the original Hebrew itſelf.—The preterperfect, therefore, as diſtinguiſhed from the aoriſt preterite, is rather an uſeful, than a neceſſary, tenſe. In Latin, by means of an adverb of preſent time joined to the preterite, its full import might in many caſes be given; though not ſo elegantly, perhaps, as in Greek or Engliſh. Jehova dedit; et nunc abſtulit Jehova: ſit nomen Jehovæ benedictum.

The Latins, as Mr. Harris and other learned authors have obſerved, ſometimes uſe their perfect tenſe, to denote the annihilation or diſcontinuance of the attribute expreſſed by the verb: *fuit*, for example, to ſignify *he has been, he is no more*; *vixit, he has lived, he is dead*; and, at the concluſion of Academical harangues, *dixi, I have done ſpeaking, I am ſilent*. In this view, the verbs *fuit, vixit*, and *dixi* are to be conſidered as *preter-perfect*; that is, as expreſſing an attribute connected with *that definite paſt time which terminates in or near the preſent*.—Thus, when Cicero had, by virtue of a ſort of dictatorial authority conferred on him by the Senate for a temporary purpoſe, put to death ſome noblemen of Rome, who had been concerned in Catiline's conſpiracy, he appeared in the forum, and, in the hearing of all the people, who were anxious to know the event, cried out with a loud voice, "*Vixerunt*," they *have lived*; that is, *they are dead*; "their life continued down to this time has "juſt now terminated." Perhaps Cicero might have a ſcruple to uſe a more explicit term; *death* being one of thoſe words that the Romans thought it ominous to pronounce on certain occaſions. Or perhaps, though what he had done was conſtitutional, and of great publick utility, yet, being extraordinary, and in a popular ſtate ſomewhat hazardous at ſuch a time, he might wiſh to mitigate the general opinion of its ſeverity,

ſeverity, by announcing it in ſuch a manner, as ſhould fix the attention of the people rather upon the *lives* and *crimes* of the conſpirators, than upon their puniſhment.

Virgil has introduced the ſame idiom, with the happieſt effect, in one or two paſſages of the Eneid. On the night of the deſtruction of Troy, Eneas, warned in a dream that the city was betrayed and on fire, ſtarts from his bed, and, alarmed by the uproar of the battle, and the glare of the conflagration, ruſhes out in arms to attack the enemy. In his way he meets Panthus the prieſt of Apollo. What is the ſtate of our affairs, Panthus, ſaid he; what is to be done? Panthus with a groan replied,

Venit ſumma dies, et ineluctabile tempus
Dardaniæ: *fuimus* Troes, *fuit* Ilium, et ingens
Gloria Teucrorum.

" Our laſt hour is come: Troy *has been:*
" we *have been* Trojans." As if he had ſaid,
" Trojans, and their city, and all their glory,
" are to be reckoned among the things that
" *have been*, but are now no more."—The ſame poet, ſpeaking of Ardea, an antient Rutilian town, has theſe words,

—— et nunc magnum manet Ardea nomen,
Sed fortuna *fuit*.

" Ardea is ſtill a great name; but its fortune
" *has been*, or is over and gone." Rueus, indeed, the learned editor of Virgil for the

uſe of the Dauphin, explains the word otherwiſe, and makes it ſignify, that "fortune "had ſo determined:" and in this he is countenanced by Scaliger. But the interpretation here given is more ſuitable to the context, as well as to the ſolemn phraſeology of the poet; and is, beſides, warranted by Taubmannus and Mr. Harris.

Rex *erat* Æneas nobis *—ſays Ilioneus to Dido, when he is deſcribing the forlorn condition of the Trojans, then juſt landed in Africa, and (as he imagined) without their leader. The verſe would have admitted *fuit*, which in this place might ſeem to have, but really would not have, the ſame meaning. For *fuit* would have implied that, in the opinion of the ſpeaker, Eneas was now no more; whereas from what follows we learn, that it ſeemed to him not improbable, that their commander might ſtill be alive. The imperfect tenſe *erat*, which only affirms, that Eneas was formerly their king, without ſaying that he had ceaſed to be ſo, has therefore a propriety which *fuit* would not have had, and which the ſcantineſs of the Engliſh verb makes it impoſſible for a Tranſlator to expreſs without circumlocution.

I ſaid, that the nature of the tenſe we now ſpeak of is more fully expreſſed by the common appellation of *preterperfect*, than by

* Æneid. i. 544.

that

that of the *perfect preſent*, which is the name the Stoicks gave it. And ſo indeed it is for the moſt part. But I ought to have added, that this tenſe in Greek does ſometimes imply, not paſt time terminating in or near the preſent, nor even complete action, but *paſt and preſent time united*; in which caſe it becomes a ſort of preſent, and, in Doctor Clarke's opinion, ſhould be called, not the preterperfect, but the *preſent perfect*: as in the following line of Homer:

* Kluthi meu, Argurotox', hos Chruſên amphi-
bebêkas;

" Hear me, O God of the ſilver bow, who
" *haſt been and art* the guardian of Chryſê."

Mr. Harris ſeems to think, that, in Virgil, the preterperfect often implies the ſame ſort of time with the preſent. That this is never the caſe, I will not affirm. But, if I miſtake not, moſt of the paſſages he has quoted will be found to have a more expreſſive meaning, if we ſuppoſe the tenſe in queſtion to ſignify *paſt* time. For example,

——— Si brachia forte *remiſit*,
Atque illum in præceps prono *rapit* alveus
amni. †

I would render thus: " If he who rows
" againſt the ſtream *has intermitted* for a

* Κλῦθι μευ Αργυροτοξ' ὃς χρυσην ἀμφιβεβηκας. Iliad. i.
† Georg. i. ver. 202.

" moment

" moment the exertion of his arms, head-
" long *he is* inſtantly born by the current of
" the river." For *atque* is here uſed in the antique ſenſe, and denotes *immediately*; as in that line of Ennius,

Atque atque ad muros properat Romana juventus.

—So in the deſcription of the night-ſtorm of thunder, lightning, and rain,

Terra *tremit*, *fugere* feræ—*

" The earth is trembling"—you feel it, and therefore that commotion is *preſent*: but, when you look around you, *fugere feræ*, you find that the wild beaſts have diſappeared, and therefore *had fled* away, before you lifted up your eyes. When the poet ſays,

—— tardis ingens ubi flexibus *errat*
Mincius, et tenera *prætexit* arundine ripas: †

" The great Mincius *rolls* ſlowly winding
" along, and *fringes* (or *borders*) his banks
" with reeds;" I agree with Mr. Harris, that the two verbs are the ſame in reſpect of time; but I do not find, that the tenſes are different. The learned author probably miſtook the preſent of *prætexo* for the preterit of *prætego*: which laſt is a word that Virgil never uſes, and which I cannot recollect to have ſeen in any Claſſick of the Auguſtan age.

* Georg. i. ver. 330. † Georg. iii. ver. 15.

Once

Once more, when the ſame poet ſays, of a ſhip,

—— illa noto citius, celerique ſagitta,
Ad terram *fugit*, et portu ſe *condidit* alto: *

" Swifter than the wind, or an arrow, ſhe " *flies* to land;" — this is preſent; " and " now," before I can ſpeak the word, " ſhe " *has run* into the harbour." There is in this example the ſame diverſity of time, as if I were to ſay: " See how ſwiftly the boy " purſues the butterfly; he *runs*—and now " he *has caught* it."—But of this, enough.

II. 2. The tenſes of paſt time denote two ſorts of actions; firſt, actions *complete* or *perfect*, and ſecondly, actions *incomplete* or *imperfect*.

Firſt, I ſay, the tenſes of paſt time denote complete actions. Of this kind, for the moſt part, is the preterperfect above deſcribed, which expreſſes paſt time as ending in the preſent, or near it.—Of this kind, alſo, is the aoriſt of the paſt † *egrapſa*, *I wrote*, or *I did write*; as already obſerved.

And of the ſame kind is the tenſe called *Pluſquamperfectum*; which denotes complete action connected, not with preſent, but with paſt time. That this is its import, will appear from an example. " He came to

* Æneid. v.

† εγραψα.

" forbid

" forbid me to write, but I *had written* be-
" fore he came." Here obſerve, that the words *I had written* refer, firſt, to a complete action; ſecondly, to paſt time; and, thirdly, *to an action that was prior in time to another action which is alſo paſt.* This is the peculiar meaning of the pluſquamperfect: ſo that in three reſpects it reſembles the preterperfect, namely, in denoting *complete action*, *paſt time*, and *paſt time definite*; but from the preterperfect it differs in this one reſpect, that the time expreſſed by it terminates not in time preſent, but at ſome point of the time that is paſt. And the double reference which it bears to paſt time appears in our complex way of expreſſing it, *I had written*; in which it is obſervable, that the auxiliary *had* and the participle *written* are both ſignificant of paſt time. The Greeks and Latins elegantly expreſs this tenſe by one word, which is derived immediately from the preterperfect, to which indeed it bears a nearer affinity than to any other tenſe: *ſcripſi*, *ſcripſeram*; * *gegrapha*, *egegraphein*.—So much for thoſe tenſes of paſt time, which denote *complete action*.

Secondly, there is alſo a preterite tenſe, which denotes *incomplete action*: *Scribebam*, *I was writing*. In this expreſſion it is implied, that the action is *paſt*, that it *continued*, or might have continued for ſome

* γεγραφα, εγεγραφειν.

time,

time, but that it was *not finiſhed*. The tenſe therefore is very properly called the *imperfect preterite*. The Greeks gave it a name ſignifying * *extended*; and deſcribed it more particularly, by ſaying, that "it is the "extended and incomplete part of the paſt." —Eneas, in Virgil, ſpeaking of the deſtruction of Troy, relates, that, after he had conducted his father and followers to a place of ſafety, he returned alone to the burning city, in queſt of his wife Creuſa, who was miſſing. He went firſt to his own houſe, thinking, ſhe might have wandered thither: but there, he ſays,

—— *Irruerant* Danai, et tectum omne *tenebant*;

"the Greeks *had ruſhed* in, and *were poſſeſ-* "*ſing* the whole houſe." Obſerve the effect of the pluſquamperfect, and imperfect, tenſes. The Greeks *had ruſhed* in, *irruerant*; that action *was over*, and had been compleated *before he came*: but the act of poſſeſſing the houſe, *tenebant*, was *not over*, nor *finiſhed*, but *ſtill continuing*. This example is taken notice of by Mr. Harris. I ſhall give another from Virgil, and one from Ovid.

In the account of the paintings, which Eneas is ſurpriſed to find in the temple of Juno at Carthage, they being all, it ſeems, on the ſubject of the Trojan war, the poet mentions the following circumſtance,

* παρατατικος.

Ter circum Iliacos *raptaverat* Hectora muros,
Exanimumque auro corpus *vendebat* Achilles:

which informs us both of the action of the picture, and of the event that was ſuppoſed to have preceded it. "Achilles *had dragged* "the body of Hector three times round "the walls of Troy;"—this is the previous event;—"and *was ſelling*," that is, was repreſented in the act of delivering, "the "body to Priam, and receiving the ran-"ſom." All this is eaſily conceived; and an excellent ſubject it is for a picture. But if, without diſtinguiſhing the tenſes, we were to underſtand the paſſage, as Dryden has tranſlated it,

Thrice round the walls of Troy Achilles drew
The corpſe of Hector, whom in fight he ſlew, &c.

we ſhould be inclined to think, that Virgil knew very little of the laws, or of the powers, of painting. For, according to this interpretation, Achilles muſt have been painted in the act *of dragging Hector three times* round Troy, and alſo in the act of delivering the body to Priam. Pitt, Trapp, and Ogilvie, in their Tranſlations, have fallen into the ſame impropriety; a proof, that the theory of tenſes has not always been attended to, even by men of learning.

When Dido had juſt ſtruck the fatal blow, and lay in the agonies of death, the beha-

viour

viour of her Sifter, as deſcribed by Dryden, is ſomewhat extraordinary. Anna was at a little diſtance from the pile, on which lay the unfortunate queen: but, hearing of what had happened, ſhe ran in diſtraction to the place, and addreſſed Dido in a long ſpeech. That being ended,

—— She mounts the pile with eager haſte,
And in her arms the dying queen embraced;
Her *temples chafed*, and *her own garments* tore,*
To ſtanch the ſtreaming blood, and cleanſe the gore.

The ſpeech is very fine, and very pathetick; in Virgil, at leaſt, it is ſo: but, as it appears in Dryden, (and Pitt commits the ſame miſtake) never was any thing of the kind more unſeaſonable. The poor lady was dying, the blood ſtreaming from her wound; and yet this affectionate ſiſter (for ſuch we know ſhe was) would not attempt any thing for her relief, till ſhe had declaimed for fourteen lines together.—But, from Virgil's own account we learn, that Anna did not loſe a moment. She *had mounted* the lofty pile, and *was holding* her dying ſiſter to her boſom, and weeping, and *endeavouring* to ſtop the effuſion of blood, all the while that thoſe

* Conſidering Dido's condition, to *chafe her temples* was abſurd, if not cruel: and to inſinuate, that Anna on this occaſion did not ſpare *her own clothes*, is ridiculouſly trifling. Virgil ſays not a word of chafing temples, or of tearing garments.

paſſionate exclamations were breaking from her.

—— Sic fata, gradus *evaſerat* altos
Semianimemque ſinu germanam amplexa *fovebat*
Cum gemitu, atque atros *ſiccabat* veſte cruores.

This the Engliſh poet would have known, if he had not confounded the imperfect tenſe with the perfect and pluſquamperfect, and ſuppoſed them all to mark the ſame ſort of time and of action. Similar blunders are frequent in Dryden, and in all the other tranſlators of Virgil that I have ſeen.

In Ovid, when the Flood was abated, Deucalion, having concluded a very tender ſpeech to Pyrrha with this ſentiment, "It "has pleaſed the Gods, that we are the only "ſurvivors of the whole human race;" the poet adds,

Dixerat; et *flebant*: placuit celeſte precari
Numen.—

"He *had done ſpeaking*; and they *were weep-*
"*ing*; when it occurred to them to im-
"plore the aid of the Goddeſs of the place."
The ſpeech had been for ſome time concluded; then followed a pauſe, during which they wept in ſilence; and, while they were weeping, they formed this pious reſolution. The pluſquamperfect, followed by the imperfect, is here very emphatical, and gives in two words an exact view of the behaviour of

of this forlorn pair; which would be in a great meaſure loſt, if, confounding the tenſes in Engliſh, we were to tranſlate it, as is vulgarly done; "He ſpoke, and they wept:" which marks neither the continuance of the laſt action, nor that it was ſubſequent to the firſt.—If children are not well inſtructed in the nature of the ſeveral tenſes, it is impoſſible for them to enter into the delicacies of claſſical expreſſion.

The Latins elegantly uſe this imperfect tenſe to ſignify actions that are cuſtomary, and often repeated. Thus *dicebat* may imply, *he was ſaying*, or *he was wont to ſay*; the ſame with *ſolebat dicere*. For actions that have become habitual, or which are frequently repeated, may be ſaid to be always going on, and may therefore with philoſophick propriety be expreſſed by the imperfect tenſe.

It alſo deſerves notice, that the antient painters and ſtatuaries, both Greek and Latin, made uſe of this tenſe, when they put their names to their performances. On a famous ſtatue of Hercules ſtill extant are inſcribed theſe words, * *Glycôn Athênaios epoiei*, Glycon Athenienſis *faciebat*, Glycon an Athenian *was making* it. The phraſe was thought modeſt; becauſe it implied, that the artiſt had indeed been at work upon the ſtatue,

* Γλυκων Αθηναιος ἐποιει.

but did not pretend to ſay that he had finiſhed it, or made it complete: which would have been the meaning, if he had given it in the aoriſt * *epoiêſe*, *fecit*, *made* it. Some of our printers have adopted the ſame tenſe at the beginning or end of their books; "*Ex-*
" *cudebat* Henricus Stephanus: *Excudebant*
" Robertus et Andreas Foulis."

Ceſar, whoſe narrative is not leſs diſtinguiſhed by its modeſty, than his actions were by their greatneſs, often uſes the imperfect, in ſpeaking of himſelf, where I think he would have uſed the perfect, if he had been ſpeaking of another. This muſt have been wonderfully pleaſing to a Roman; who would be much more ſenſible of the delicacy, than we are. Indeed, the beſt antient and modern criticks, particularly Cicero, Quintilian, and Roger Aſcham, ſpeak with a ſort of rapture of the exquiſite propriety of Ceſar's ſtyle. And as to his narrative, though he pretended to nothing more, than to write a journal or diary, (for ſuch is the meaning of the word, which is vulgarly tranſlated *Commentaries*) — as to his narrative, I ſay, Cicero declares, that no man in his ſenſes will ever attempt to improve it. The frequency of theſe imperfects in Ceſar has, if I miſtake not, another uſe: for it keeps the reader continually in mind, that the book was written from day to day, *in the midſt*

* ἐποιησε.

of

of buſineſs, and while the tranſactions there recorded might be ſaid rather *to be going on*, than to be completed.

From the few examples here given it will appear, that the Imperfect and Pluſquamperfect are very uſeful, and may be the ſource of much elegant expreſſion; and that, if one were not taught to diſtinguiſh, in reſpect of meaning as well as of form, theſe tenſes from each other, and the preterit from both, one could not pretend to underſtand, far leſs to tranſlate, any good Claſſick author. The want of them, therefore, in Hebrew, muſt be a deficiency. Yet, in a language, like the Hebrew, which has been employed chiefly in delivering ſentiments and recording facts, in the ſimpleſt manner, with little rhetorical art, and without any oſtentation of harmonious and elaborate periods, this is not perhaps ſo material a deficiency, as at firſt ſight it may appear.

For firſt, if we are willing to diſpenſe with elegance and energy, the preterit may often be uſed for the pluſquamperfect. If I ſay, "He came to forbid me to write, but I *wrote* "before he came, (inſtead of *I had writ-* "*ten*)," the meaning is perceptible enough; though not ſo grammatically expreſſed as it might have been, nor indeed ſo ſtrongly. In the tranſlation of the fourteenth chapter of St. Matthew, we have theſe words: "And "Herod ſaid unto his ſervants, This is

" John the Baptiſt; he is riſen from the " dead; and therefore mighty works do ſhow " forth themſelves in him. For Herod *had* " *laid hold* on John, and bound him, and " put him in priſon, &c." Here the pluſquamperfect *had laid hold and bound* is elegantly uſed. But the Greek, following, as in many other parts of the Goſpels, (eſpecially of Matthew's Goſpel) the Hebrew idiom, has the aoriſt of the preterit: " For " Herod, having laid hold on John, *bound* " him, and *put* him in priſon." This gives the ſenſe; though not ſo emphatically, as it is expreſſed in the Engliſh Bible.*

Secondly: The preterit *may* be uſed, without ambiguity, for the imperfect. This change might often be made in Ceſar, as already hinted. The French *j'etois* and *je fus* are both rendered in Engliſh *I was*. And, inſtead of *Stephanus excudebat*, at the bottom of a title-page, if we were to read *Stephanus excudit*, the phraſe, though leſs claſſical, would be equally intelligible. So liable, indeed, are theſe two tenſes to be confounded, that in ſome Latin grammars (as formerly obſerved) we find *I loved or did love* given as the interpretation of *amabam*.

Thirdly: The Hebrews do ſometimes give the full ſenſe of the pluſquamperfect, by pre-

* Other examples of the preterit uſed for the pluſquamperfect, ſee in Luke xix. 15. John v. 13. Apocalyps, xxi. 1.

fixing,

fixing, to the infinitive of the verb, or to a ſort of verbal noun called a gerund, the word *calah*, *he finiſhed*, or *he made an end of*. "As ſoon as Iſaac made an end of bleſſing "Jacob" — might, according to the ſyntax of thoſe languages that have a pluſquamperfect, be thus rendered without any impropriety, "As ſoon as Iſaac *had bleſſed* Ja-"cob." * — A ſimilar idiom we have in Engliſh; as when, inſtead of *dixerat*, we ſay, *he had done ſpeaking*, or *he had ceaſed to ſpeak*.

III. 1. It remains now to ſhow, that the tenſes expreſſive of *future* time may alſo denote, firſt *Incomplete* actions, and ſecondly *Complete* actions.

Firſt, *Scribam*, *I ſhall write*, denotes incomplete action: for it does not ſay, whether I am to write for a long or for a ſhort time, or whether I am to finiſh what I begin. This part of the verb, therefore, to which the Greek † *grapſô* correſponds, is an *imperfect future*; and is alſo (as was formerly ſhown) an aoriſt of the future. In our way of expreſſing it, by the auxiliaries *ſhall* and *will*, its character appears manifeſt. *Shall* or *will* refers to future *time* indefinitely; and *write* refers to an action, which is indeed to begin, but of whoſe completion nothing is ſaid.

* Geneſ. xxvii. 30. See alſo Numb. xvi. 31.
† γραψω.

In like manner, *Scripturus ſum, I am about to write*, though definite in regard to time, becauſe it implies, that the action is immediately to commence, is yet as much an *imperfect* as the other future, becauſe it ſays nothing of the finiſhing or compleating of the action.

But, ſecondly, *Scripſero, I ſhall have written*, or *I ſhall have done writing*, is a *perfect future*, and denotes complete action. And our complex way of putting it in Engliſh does fully expreſs its character; *I ſhall have written:* for *ſhall* denotes future time, *written* implies paſt action; and *have written* ſignifies *complete action*, with *paſt time terminating in the preſent*. So that the whole meaning is, that " when a certain time now " future comes to be preſent, a certain ac- " tion will then, and juſt then, be finiſhed." —This tenſe the Greek tongue, for all its copiouſneſs, cannot expreſs in one word. * *Eſomai gegraphôs* is the phraſe for it; *eſomai* the future of † *eimi I am*, and *gegraphôs* the preterperfect participle; " I ſhall be in the " condition of having written." The Latin grammarians call it *the future of the ſubjunctive mood*; for which they are ſeverely blamed by Dr. Clarke, in his notes upon Homer; who contends, and I think with reaſon, that it is as really *indicative*, as *Scribam*, and

* εσομαι γεγραφως. † Ειμι.

Scriptus

Scriptus ero. The learned Doctor calls it the *perfect future.* Voſſius gives it the ſame name; which Ruddiman * approves of: and Mr. Harris, and the Author of a Treatiſe, *On the origin and progreſs of language*, deſcribe it under the ſame character.—In Hebrew, the full import of this tenſe is given by joining the future of *calah* (he made an end of) to the infinitive or gerund of another verb. Thus, "And it ſhall be, when the "officers *have made an end of ſpeaking* unto "the people, that they ſhall make captains "of the armies to lead the people,"—would have been equally juſt in reſpect of ſenſe, and better ſuited to the conciſeneſs of the original, if it had been rendered, "And it ſhall be, "when the officers *ſhall have ſpoken* unto "the people," &c. †

IV. There is yet another light, in which the tenſes may be conſidered. Some of them, as we have ſeen, unite two times (as it were) in one; others expreſs one time only. The former may be called *Compound* tenſes; the latter *Simple*.

1. Of the Compound Tenſes, one is the preterperfect ‡ *gegrapha*; which unites the paſt with the preſent; as particularly appears in our way of expreſſing it, with an auxiliary of the preſent, *I have*, and a participle of

* Rudiments of the Latin tongue, page 43.
† Deuteron. xx. 9. ‡ γεγραφα.

complete action and paſt time, *written*; I have written.

Another is the pluſquamperfect, *Scripſeram*, which unites *the paſt with the paſt*, by intimating, that a certain paſt action was completed before another action which is alſo paſt. The union of theſe two paſt times is alſo ſignified by us, when we join the preterite of the auxiliary *had* with the preterite of the participle *written*; I had written.

A third compound tenſe is the future of complete action, or the perfect future *Scripſero*, I ſhall have written, * *Eſomai gegraphôs*; which, as appears by the Engliſh and Greek way of expreſſing it, forms an *union* of the preterperfect, that is, *of the complete paſt ending in the preſent*, with the *future*. Of this tenſe it is remarkable, that in the Engliſh (as in the Greek) way of expreſſing it, *I ſhall have written*, or, *I ſhall have done writing*, there is no auxiliary of the ſubjunctive mood: a circumſtance, that ſufficiently ſhows the abſurdity of calling it *the future of the ſubjunctive*.

A fourth is the definite future, *Scripturus ſum*, I am going to write, or, I am about to write: in which the preſent is united with the future, *Sum* with *Scripturus*, to intimate a futurity that is juſt commencing. We expreſs it in Engliſh by a ſort of figure: I

* εσομαι γεγραφως.

am

am *going* to write; that is, I am engaged in an action which is preparatory to, or will be immediately followed by, the act of writing. The other Engliſh phraſe is, I am *about* to write; that is, I am at the *point*, the *nearer end*, or *the beginning* of the action of writing: for *bout* in French denotes *point* or *end*; and *au bout*, at the point, or at the end; ſo that it is probable we have derived this idiom from the French language.

A fifth compound tenſe is in Latin *Scripturus eram*; in Greek * *Emellon graphein*; in Engliſh, I *was about* to write. We uſe it, to expreſs an action, which at a certain time now paſt would have taken place immediately, if ſomething had not happened to prevent or defer it, or at leaſt to claim a prior attention. So in the tenth chapter of the Apocalypſe; "And when the ſeven "thunders had uttered their voices, I was "about to write, *Emellon graphein:* and I "heard a voice from heaven, ſaying unto "me, Seal up thoſe things which the ſeven "thunders uttered, and write them not." It is therefore a compoſition of the paſt *eram*, with the definite or paulo-poſt *future*, *Scripturus*. But there is not in any language, ſo far as I know, a contrivance for comprehending all this in *one word*; and therefore, like ſome other tenſes, it muſt be

* εμελλον γραφειν.

ſignified

ſignified by auxiliary words joined to the participle of future time.

I ſhall be writing, * *Eſomai graphôn*, is the laſt compound tenſe that I ſhall mention. It occurs in ſentences like the following, "I cannot come tomorrow before dinner, "for *I ſhall be writing* all the morning;" and is therefore a coalition of the *future* with the *imperfect*. It differs however from the incomplete future formerly deſcribed, and exemplified by *Scribam*, I ſhall write. This laſt denotes incomplete action, and indefinite (or aoriſtical) futurity: but *I ſhall be writing* denotes *both theſe*, together with *extended* or *continued action*. — So much for *compound* tenſes; which unite two or more times in one. — If the reader will not allow theſe two laſt forms of expreſſion to be Tenſes, I ſhall not inſiſt on it, that they are. I call them ſo, becauſe they have been ſo called by others.

2. The *ſimple* tenſes, expreſſive of *one time only*, are theſe that follow.—1. The definite preſent, *Scribo*, *I write*.—2. The aoriſt of the preſent, "A merry heart *maketh* a chearful "countenance."—3. The aoriſt of the paſt, † *Egrapſa*, *I wrote*, or *I did write*.—4. The aoriſt of the future, *Scribam*, *I ſhall write*. —5. The imperfect, or the continued and incomplete paſt, *Scribebam*, *I was writing*.—

* εσομαι γραφων. † εγραψα.

Theſe

Theſe tenſes have all been ſufficiently deſcribed under other characters.

And now, of the ELEVEN TENSES here explained, which, being a ſtrange as well as an odd number, we may, by omitting the two laſt, and retaining the Paulo-poſt-future (becauſe there is a tenſe of that name in the Greek Grammar) reduce to NINE, the number of the Muſes;—of theſe eleven tenſes, I ſay, the arrangement and general nature may be ſeen at one glance, in the following Table.

TENSES OF ACTIVE VERBS.

DEFINITE IN TIME.

The *Preſent*. Scribo. I write. N° 1.
The *Preterperfect*. I have written. N° 2.
The *Paulo-poſt-future*. Scripturus ſum. N° 3.

INDEFINITE IN TIME, OR AORIST.

The *Preſent*. A merry heart maketh, &c. N° 4.
The *Paſt*. *Egrapſa*. I wrote, or I did write. N° 5.
The *Future*. Scribam. I ſhall write. N° 6.

COMPLETE IN RESPECT OF ACTION.

The *Preterperfect*. I have written. N° 2.
The *Aoriſt of the paſt*. I wrote. N° 5.

The

The *Pluſquamperfect*. I had written. N° 7.
The *Future perfect*. Scripſero. I ſhall have written. N° 8.

INCOMPLETE IN RESPECT OF ACTION.

The *Imperfect and continued paſt*. I was writing. N° 9.
The *Aoriſt of the future*. Scribam. I ſhall write. N° 6.
The *Paulo-poſt-future*. Scripturus ſum. N° 3.

COMPOUND, AS UNITING TWO OR MORE TIMES IN ONE TENSE.

The *Preterperfect*. Paſt with preſent. N° 2.
The *Pluſquamperfect*. Paſt with paſt. N° 7.
The *Future perfect*. Preſent and paſt with future. N° 8.
The *Paulo-poſt-future*. Preſent with future. N° 3.
The *Paſt with future*. Scripturus eram. N° 10.
The *Imperfect with future*. I ſhall be writing. N° 11.

SIMPLE, EXPRESSIVE OF ONE TIME.

The *Definite preſent*. N° 1.
The *Aoriſt of the preſent*. N° 4.
The *Aoriſt of the paſt*. N° 5.
The *Aoriſt of the future*. N° 6.
The *Imperfect and extended paſt*. N° 9.

The Tenſes, reduced to Nine, are, 1. The *Indefinite Preſent*. 2. The *Definite Preſent*. 3. The *Imperfect*. 4. The *Indefinite Preterit*, or *Aoriſt of the Paſt*. 5. The *Preterperfect*. 6. The *Pluſquamperfect*. 7. The *Indefinite* or *Aoriſt Future*. 8. The *Paulo-poſt-future*. 9. The *Perfect Future*.

It will perhaps occur, that there are two Greek tenſes, whereof in this long detail I have given no account; namely, the *ſecond aoriſt*, and the *ſecond future*. The truth is, that I conſider them as unneceſſary. Their place, for any thing I know to the contrary, might at all times be ſupplied by the firſt aoriſt and the firſt future. Some grammarians are of opinion, that the firſt aoriſt ſignifies time paſt in general, and the ſecond, indefinite time paſt; and that the firſt future denotes a nearer, and the ſecond a more remote futurity. But this, I apprehend, is mere conjecture, unſupported by proof. And therefore I incline rather to the ſentiments of thoſe who teach, that the ſecond future and ſecond aoriſt have no meaning different from the firſt future and firſt aoriſt; and that they are the preſent and imperfect of ſome obſolete theme of the verb, and, when the other theme came into uſe, happened to be retained, for the ſake of variety perhaps, or by accident, with a preterite and future ſignification. Be this as it will; as theſe tenſes are peculiar to the Greek, and have nothing

correſponding to them in other tongues, we need not ſcruple to overlook them as ſuperfluous.

Different nations may make uſe of different contrivances for marking the times of their verbs. The Greeks and Latins diſtinguiſh their tenſes, as well as their moods, and the caſes of their nouns, adjectives, and participles, by varying the termination, or otherwiſe changing the form, of the word; retaining, however, thoſe radical letters, which prove the inflection to be of the ſame kindred with its theme. The modern tongues, particularly the Engliſh, abound in auxiliary words, which vary the meaning of the noun or attributive, without requiring any conſiderable varieties of inflection. Thus, *I did read, I ſhall read, I ſhould read,* have the ſame import with *legi, legam, legerem.* It is obvious, that a language, like the Greek and Latin, which can thus comprehend in one word the meaning of two or three, muſt have ſome advantages over thoſe which cannot. Perhaps indeed it may not be more perſpicuous: but, in the arrangement of words, and conſequently in harmony and energy, as well as in conciſeneſs, it may be much more elegant. Every idea that Greek or Latin can expreſs may in one way or other be expreſſed in Engliſh. But if we were to attempt the ſame varieties of arrangement, we ſhould ſee

a wonderful ſuperiority in the former. Virgil could ſay,

Formoſam reſonare doces Amaryllida ſilvas:

But we cannot ſay, "Fair to reſound thou "teacheſt Amaryllis the woods." Had the poet's verſe permitted, the ſyntax of his language would not have hindered him from changing the order of theſe five words in many different ways, with equal ſignificancy. But when we attempt more than two or three modes of arrangement, we are apt to fall into ambiguity or nonſenſe. Nay in many caſes we are limited to one particular arrangement. A Roman might have ſaid, *Achilles interfecit Hectorem*, or *Hectorem interfecit Achilles*, or *Achilles Hectorem interfecit*, or *Hectorem Achilles interfecit*, or *Interfecit Hectorem Achilles*, or *Interfecit Achilles Hectorem:* but we muſt ſay, *Achilles ſlew Hector*; for, if we vary the ſentence ever ſo little, we produce ambiguity, nonſenſe, or falſehood; ambiguity, as *Achilles Hector ſlew*; nonſenſe, as *Slew Hector Achilles*; falſehood, as *Hector ſlew Achilles*.

It has been obſerved of the Engliſh, that they are much inclined to ſhorten their words into monoſyllables; which a certain author wittily aſſigns as a proof, that taciturnity is natural to the people. It may alſo be remarked, that we are not friendly to inflection: for, few as the terminations of our verbs are, we ſeem inclinable to reduce their number.

number. Thus ſome authors confound *wrote* with *written*, or rather aboliſh *written*, and uſe *wrote* inſtead of it; and ſay, not only, "he "*wrote* a book," which is right; but alſo, "the book is well *wrote*," inſtead of "well "*written*." To miſtake the aoriſt of the paſt for the preterite participle, would have a ſtrange effect in Latin or Greek; and is not leſs ungrammatical in Engliſh.—In like manner, ſome of our writers ſeem to forget, that Engliſh verbs have in the indicative mood a ſecond perſon ſingular; for they ſay, *thou writes*, inſtead of *thou writeſt*: which is as improper in our language, as *tu ſcripſit* would be in Latin. And, both in ſpeech and in writing, it has been too cuſtomary, of late years, to diſcontinue the uſe of that conjunctive or ſubjunctive mood, which was formerly, by our beſt writers, introduced after ſuch words as *if*, *though*, *before*, *whether*, *unleſs*, &c.: as, "If he *write*, I will anſwer "him,"—"Though he *ſlay* me, I will truſt "in him,"—"I expect to ſee him before he "*go* away," &c. inſtead of which phraſes, many people would now ſay, leſs properly, "if he *writes*—though he *ſlays*—before he "*goes*," &c. *—— This however is the more excuſeable, becauſe the indicative may ſometimes be elegantly uſed in ſuch a connection: as, "If there *is* a Power above us, he muſt

* This, and the preceding, and ſome other grammatical and verbal improprieties, are frequent in Sterne.

"delight

"delight in virtue." For the firſt clauſe, though introduced by *if*, is not meant to expreſs what is in any degree doubtful, indefinite, or dependent: and therefore, it has not that character, which diſtinguiſhes the ſubjunctive from the indicative.—As our language has too little inflection, it is pity it ſhould loſe any of the little it has.

Paſt time being prior to preſent, and preſent to future, one would think, that grammarians, in arranging the tenſes, ſhould have given the firſt place to the preterites. Yet in the Greek and Latin, and all modern grammars, the order is different, and the preſent has the precedency: which by Scaliger is thus whimſically accounted for. What ſtands connected with preſent time is perceived by ſenſe alone, and may therefore be known in ſome degree to all animals; but memory, as well as ſenſe, is requiſite to give information of what is paſt; and, in order to anticipate the future, ſenſe, memory, and reaſon are all neceſſary.—The true reaſon I take to be this. The Preſent is put firſt, becauſe in Greek and Latin it is conſidered as the theme or root of the verb; every other tenſe being derived from it, and it derived from no other tenſe: and the Preterits take place of the Future, in Latin, on account of the natural precedency of paſt to future time; and, in Greek, the Future takes place of the Pre-

terits, becauſe from the Future the Preterits are derived.

Having finiſhed the ſubject of Tenſes, I proceed to explain the nature of *Moods*, and to inquire, in what reſpects they are eſſential to language.

SECT. IV.

The ſubject continued.—Of the Modes, or Moods of verbs.—Gerunds and Supines.—Species of verbs.

IN ſpeaking, we not only convey our thoughts to others; but alſo give intimation of thoſe peculiar affections, or mental energies, by which we are determined to think and ſpeak. Hence the origin of *Modes* or *Moods* in verbs. They are ſuppoſed to make known our ideas, with ſomething alſo of the intention, or temper of mind, with which we conceive and utter them.

In moſt languages, the uſe of moods is a matter of ſome difficulty; and the ſource of much elegance, in marking with a ſignificant brevity certain minute varieties of meaning, which without this expedient would produce awkward circumlocutions. This will appear from ſome of the following examples. And the advantages here hinted at are more conſpicuous in Greek and Latin, than in Engliſh. For in thoſe languages the moods are marked by particular inflections of the verb; and the rules for their uſe are aſcertained more exactly than in our tongue, and better adapted to the varieties of human thought.

As the theory of moods is not altogether the ſame in any two languages, one cannot enter into it with any great degree of minuteneſs, in an inquiry into the principles of Univerſal Grammar. All therefore I have to do in this place, is to give ſome account of their general nature, and ſhow in what reſpects they may be eſſential to language.

If I affirm concerning that which I conceive abſolutely to be preſent, or paſt, or future, I uſe what is called the *Indicative* or *Declarative* mood: as *I go, I was going, I had gone, I went, I ſhall go.* In all hiſtory and ſcience this mood predominates; and in every language it is neceſſary. It is the buſineſs of the hiſtorian to ſay, not what Ceſar *might have done*, or what he *might have been*, but what he *was*, and what he *did:* the truths of geometry are invariable, and therefore abſolute: and the philoſopher conſiders the works of nature as they *are*, *have been*, and *will be*, and not as they *might have been* under the influence of different laws.

If, together with the ſimple affirmation of the verb, I alſo expreſs ſome modification or affection of it, ſuch as power, poſſibility, liberty, will, duty, &c. the mood is called *Potential:* as *I may write, I might have been conſulted, I could live on vegetables, I would ſpeak if I durſt, He ſhould have acted otherwiſe.*

If

If I ſignify, by means of a verb, ſomething which is affirmed, not abſolutely by itſelf, but relatively to ſome other verb on which it is dependent, I uſe the *Subjunctive* mood: as, I eat, *that I may live*; *if he go*, I will follow; *whether he be alive*, I know not. This has alſo been called the *Conjunctive* mood; perhaps becauſe the verb ſo modified is often uſhered in by a conjunction, *that*, *if*, *whether*, &c.

The *Optative* mood is ſaid to expreſs a wiſh or deſire; and in Greek is marked by a particular form or inflection of the verb. Yet, even in Greek, a wiſh may be expreſſed by other moods beſides the optative; and, without the aid of one or more auxiliary words, cannot be expreſſed even by the optative itſelf. Whence it may be inferred, that this mood is ſuperfluous, even in Greek; and, as it is found in no other tongue, that it cannot be eſſential to language. In fact, the Greek optative often conveys the meaning of a Subjunctive, or Potential. By the Attick writers it is ſometimes uſed to expreſs thoſe contingencies that depend on the human will.*—In Latin, there is no need of an Optative; wiſhes being ſignified by the Subjunctive modified by certain auxiliaries expreſſed or underſtood: as *Utinam ſaperes* (that is, *Opto ut*, *uti*, or *utinam ſaperes*) "I wiſh that

* Origin and Progreſs of Language.

" you were wife:" *O ſi Jupiter referat præteritos annos* (that is, *O quantum gauderem*, or *O quantum proficeret, ſi Jupiter*, &c.) " O that Jupiter, (or I wiſh that Jupiter) " would reſtore the years that are paſt:" *Sis bonus felixque tuis*; where *utinam* is underſtood, or *Precor ut ſis bonus*, &c. Similar contrivances take place in other tongues.

As to the Potential mood, it may, I think, in all caſes, be reſolved into either the Indicative or the Subjunctive: and therefore, and becauſe in Latin and Greek it is not marked by any peculiar inflection of the verb, I do not conſider it as eſſential to language, or as worthy of being diſtinguiſhed in Grammar by a particular name. " I *may* go," is the ſame with " It *is in my power* to go;" which is a poſitive and abſolute affirmation, requiring a verb of the indicative mood. " He " *ſhould have* gone," appears to be equally abſolute, when reſolved thus, " It *was* his duty " to go." And in like manner, " He *would* " *have* gone," is nothing more than, " He " *was* willing to go." And " I *might have* " *been* conſulted," is not materially different from, " It *was* in the power of others to " have conſulted me." In theſe examples, the Potential coincides with the Indicative.—And in the following paſſage from Horace,

Sed tacitus paſci ſi poſſet corvus, *haberet*
Plus dapis——

the

the laſt clauſe, which is commonly referred to the Potential, may be reſolved into the indicative and ſubjunctive thus: *Si corvus poſſet paſci tacitus, ita res eſt,* or *fieri poteſt, ut haberet plus dapis*; which is a ſentence conſiſting of one abſolute affirmation, or indicative verb, and of two ſubordinate or relative clauſes, in both which the mood is ſubjunctive.

The Imperative Mood ſeems to be only an elliptical way of expreſſing that, which implies abſolute affirmation, and which therefore might be with equal clearneſs, though not with equal brevity, expreſſed by the Indicative. "Go thou," is the ſame in meaning with, "I command, or I intreat thee to "go:" "*Spare* us, good Lord," may be reſolved into, "*We beſeech* thee, good Lord, to "ſpare us."

The Infinitive may be called, if you pleaſe, *the infinitive, indefinite, or imperſonal form of the verb:* but a mood it certainly is not; becauſe it implies no mental energy, or intention. Nay, if the eſſential character of the verb be, what it has been proved to be, to expreſs Affirmation, it will follow, that the infinitive is not even a part of the verb. For it expreſſes no affirmation; it has no reference to perſons or ſubſtances; it forms no compleat ſentence by itſelf, nor even when joined to a noun, unleſs it be aided by ſome *real* part of a verb either expreſſed or underſtood.

ſtood. *Lego, legebam, legi, legeram, legam,* I read, I was reading, I have read, I had read, I ſhall read, do, each of them, amount to a compleat affirmative ſentence: but *legere,* to read, *legiſſe,* to have read, *lecturum eſſe,* to be about to read, affirm nothing, and are not more applicable to any one perſon, than to any other.

But, though the Infinitive is no part of the verb, even as the ground whereon the houſe ſtands is no part of the building, it may be conſidered as the foundation of the whole verb; becauſe it expreſſes the ſimple attribute, on which, by means of inflections and auxiliary words, the authors of language have reared that vaſt fabrick of moods and tenſes, whereby are ſignified ſo many varieties of affirmation, and action, of time, perſon, and number. And this attribute it expreſſes abſtractly, as ſomething capable of being characteriſed by qualities, or made the ſubject of a propoſition; which comes ſo near the deſcription of a noun, that in moſt languages it may be uſed, and frequently is uſed, as a noun: whence ſome antient grammarians called it, *the verbal noun,* or, more properly, *the noun of the verb.**

* Non inepte hic modus (Infinitivus) a veteribus quibuſdam *Verbi Nomen* eſt appellatum. Eſt enim (ſi non vere ac ſemper, quod nonnulli volunt, Nomen Subſtantivum) ſignificatione certe ei maxime affinis; ejuſque vices ſuſtinet per omnes caſus. Ruddiman. Gram. major. par. ii. p. 217.

Thus

Thus *Scire tuum nihil eſt* * is the ſame with *Scientia tua nihil eſt*; and *Reddes dulce loqui, reddes ridere decorum*, is equally elegant and expreſſive with, *Reddes dulcem loquelam, reddes decorum riſum* †. Thus, in Engliſh, we may ſay, "*Death* is certain," or "*To die* is cer-" tain;" "He loves *learning*;" or "He "loves *to learn*."—In ſome languages, particularly the Italian and Greek, the article is prefixed to theſe infinitive nouns; which, if poſſible, makes their ſubſtantive nature ſtill more apparent; as *Il mangiare*, the eating; *l' eſſere*, the being: ‡ *To philoſophein boulomai êper to ploutein*, I chooſe *to philoſophize* rather than *to be rich*; which is the ſame with, I chooſe *philoſophy* rather than *richès*. But to ſuch infinitives we do not prefix the article in Engliſh, becauſe cuſtom has ſo determined; nor in Latin, becauſe that language has no article ‖. In the Claſſick tongues, they ſupply the place of all the caſes: in Engliſh, they may go before a verb, as nominatives, as "*To learn* is deſirable;" or after it, as accuſatives, as "I deſire *to learn*;" but they never follow a prepoſition, ſo far as I recollect, except in one paſſage of Spenſer, which, being contrary to idiom, or at leaſt obſolete, is not to be imitated:

* Perſius. † Horace.

‡ Το φιλοσοφῆιν βυλομαι ηπερ το πλυτειν.

‖ Pronominal articles are ſometimes joined to theſe infinitives in Latin: as, Cum *vivere ipſum* turpe ſit nobis. Totum *hoc* diſplicet *philoſophari*. Cicero.

For

For not to have been dipt in Lethe lake,
Could ſave the ſon of Thetis *from to die:*

that is, The having been dipt in Lethe could not ſave the ſon of Thetis *from death.*

Some authors will have it, that there are alſo in language an Interrogative mood, expreſſing a deſire of verbal information; and a Requiſitive, expreſſing a deſire of being aſſiſted or gratified. And this laſt they ſubdivide into two ſpecies, the Precative, when we addreſs a ſuperiour, and the Imperative, when we command an inferiour. But ſuch a multiplying of moods appears to be unneceſſary. The Requiſitive differs not *in form* from the Imperative *. The Interrogative is commonly expreſſed, not by any form of the verb contrived on purpoſe, but by a particular arrangement of the words, as *It is ſo: Is it ſo?*—or by the addition of ſome particle, as *Eſt verum: eſtne verum?* or merely by a change in the emphaſis or tone of the ſpeaker, as, *I did ſo: You did?* meaning, Did you ſo indeed?—And it is well obſerved, by the learned and accurate Ruddiman, "that if we will "conſtitute as many moods, as there are "various modifications wherewith a verb or "affirmation may be affected, we muſt mul-"tiply them to a very great number; and, "beſides the Indicative, Subjunctive, Poten-

* In Hebrew, an earneſt requeſt is ſignified by adding to the Imperative the particle *na*; as *Hoſanna, Save, I beſeech thee.*

"tial,

" tial, Optative, Imperative, and Interroga-
" tive, have alſo a Permiſſive, an Hortative,
" a Precative, a Conceſſive, a Mandative, a
" mode to expreſs volition, and another to
" ſignify duty :"—which, inſtead of improv-
ing the grammatical art, would only render it the more confuſed and difficult, without adding any thing to the regularity or ſignificancy of language.

Since, then, it appears, that the Potential may be reſolved into the Indicative and Subjunctive; that the Optative is ſuperfluous, being, even in Greek, a ſort of Subjunctive; that the Imperative is an Elliptical form of the Indicative; that the Infinitive is no mood at all; and that the other ſuppoſed moods abovementioned have no real foundation in language, nor claim any particular notice from the Grammarian;—it ſeems to follow, that to verbs, conſidered as expreſſive of affirmation, two moods only are *neceſſary*; the Indicative, to ſignify *affirmation abſolute*; and the Subjunctive, to denote *affirmation relative, dependent, or conditional.* Indeed it is not eaſy to conceive any mode of affirmation, which may not be reſolved into one or other of theſe two. And, in the Latin tongue, which is not defective in this particular, there are, properly ſpeaking, no more than three moods, the Indicative, Subjunctive, and Imperative: which laſt I ſhall allow to be a mood, (as it is found in ſo many languages) though not a neceſſary one.—As to the Infinitive, it is

impoſſible to prove, by any juſt reaſoning, that it has any title to the name of mood, or even to be conſidered as a part of the verb.

In fact, we might repeat, in regard to Moods, a remark formerly made on the degrees of compariſon of adjectives. Their number is in nature indefinite: but as nothing in language can be ſo, it is more convenient to reduce them to two or three, which by means of auxiliary words may be ſufficient to comprehend them all, than vainly to endeavour to provide an adjective for every poſſible degree of compariſon, or a mood for each particular energy of mind that may give a character to affirmation.

That I may not be thought more paradoxical than others, in what has been advanced on this ſubject, I ſhall conclude it with obſerving, that Perizonius reduces the moods of a finite verb to three, the Indicative, Subjunctive, and Imperative; that Ruddiman includes the Optative and Potential in the Subjunctive; that the learned author of an Eſſay on *the Origin and progreſs of language* admits, with me, only two moods of affirmation; that Scaliger denies that moods are neceſſary to the verb; and that Sanctius explodes them altogether, as having no natural connection with it.

And in behalf of this opinion of Sanctius and Scaliger many plauſible things might be ſaid. The moods ſeem reducible to two, the Indicative and Subjunctive. Every ſcholar knows, that a conſiderable part of the elegance of the Latin verb ariſes from the right application of them; and that, if in Cicero, Ceſar, and Virgil (for example) the tenſes of the latter were to be changed into the correſponding tenſes of the former, the language would appear even uncouth in the ſound, as well as inaccurate with reſpect to the ſenſe. But it may be queſtioned, whether this is not in part the effect of habit. We have always been accuſtomed to Subjunctive tenſes in Latin; and can hardly conceive that it would be intelligible without them. And that without them it would not be elegant, is allowed. But, ſetting elegance aſide, and independently on the habits acquired in reading the claſſicks, might we not, in one way or other, expreſs every neceſſary affirmation, by means of the Indicative only? Certain it is that, in many caſes, if the laws of ſyntax would permit, the ſenſe would not hinder us from uſing that mood inſtead of the other. In vulgar Engliſh, as already obſerved, this is done every moment, without any other inconvenience, than that of offending the critick, and gradually corrupting the purity of our tongue. Nay, there is reaſon to think, that many people now ſpeak and write Engliſh, without ever uſing a Subjunc-

tive, (except *would*, *could*, and ſome other auxiliaries) or knowing that there is ſuch a thing in the language. Even the Latin Grammarian allows, of certain conjunctions, that they may govern either of theſe moods. And where the rule for the uſe of the Subjunctive is more determinate, as in ſentences like the following, Neſcio an bonus *ſit*, I know not whether he *be* good, the Indicative *might*, without ambiguity, expreſs the meaning, Neſcio an bonus *eſt*, I know not whether he *is* good.

If then the Subjunctive, however ornamental and uſeful, is not to be reckoned among the neceſſaries of ſocial life, we need not be ſurpriſed, that in Hebrew, in which ſimplicity is more ſtudied than ornament, the moods ſhould be only two, the Indicative and Imperative. The Infinitive, indeed, is named as a third mood in the grammar of the language; but that is in compliance with the erroneous practice of other grammarians.

GERUNDS and SUPINES are of great importance in Latin; but being in a manner peculiar to that language, it belongs not to Univerſal Grammar to conſider them particularly. Yet a remark or two on the ſubject may not be improper.

The *Gerund* is a noun derived from the verb; but is no part of the verb, becauſe in itſelf

itſelf it does not poſſeſs the power of affirmation. It has two diſtinct offices. When in the nominative caſe it is joined to *eſt* with a dative, or in the accuſative to *eſſe* with a dative, it denotes *neceſſity* or *duty*: as *moriendum eſt mihi*, I *muſt* die; *Scio moriendum eſſe mihi*, I know that I *muſt* die: *Vivendum eſt mihi recte*, I *ought* to live honeſtly; *Fateor vivendum eſſe mihi recte*, I confeſs that I *ought* to live honeſtly. In this uſe, it is properly called a *gerund*; for that word implies, that ſomething muſt be, or is to be, or ought to be, done. And there is in Greek a ſort of participial adverb, ſometimes called the adverb of poſition, which expreſſes the meaning of this gerund, as * *Iteon moi*, *Eundum eſt mihi*, I muſt go: † *oiſteon kai elpiſteon*, *ferendum et ſperandum eſt*, we ought to endure and to hope. In Engliſh, and other modern languages, there is nothing correſpondent to this gerund; its place being ſupplied by an auxiliary verb, of duty, *ought*, or of neceſſity, *muſt*.

In another view, the Latin gerund is a verbal ſubſtantive, approaching in ſignification to that of the infinitive noun; but having this advantage over the Latin infinitive, that it admits of terminations to mark its caſes, and coincides more eaſily in ſyntax with nouns and adjectives. Examples may

* Ἴτεον μοι. † ὀιϛεον και ἐλπιϛεον.

be

be ſeen in the Latin grammar. In Greek this ſort of Gerund is the leſs neceſſary, becauſe the infinitive itſelf may be reſolved into caſes, by means of the neuter article: as, * *ek tou oran gignetai to eran*, of ſeeing comes loving; † *to ploutein eſtin en tô chrêſthai*, Being rich conſiſts in uſing. We have in Engliſh a verbal noun, of the ſame form with our active participle, which noun coincides in meaning with this Latin gerund: as, he is incapable *of writing*, he is addicted *to writing*, he *practiſes writing*, he is fatigued *with writing*.

From the infinitive of the Hebrew, by means of certain prefixed letters, (which are indeed contracted prepoſitions) are formed four words called Gerunds; which are very ſerviceable in that language, and ſometimes ſupply the place of what in other tongues we term the pluſquamperfect tenſe, and Subjunctive mood. Thus from *maſor*, *tradere*, are formed *bemſor*, *in tradendo*; *chimſor*, *cum tradidiſſem*, &c.; *limſor*, *ad tradendum*; *mimſor*, *a tradendo*. This ſomewhat reſembles the uſe, which, in Greek, by the help of prepoſitions and the neuter article, may be made of the infinitive taken as a noun.

The origin of the word *Supine*, as a term in grammar, has given riſe to ſeveral con-

* ἐκ του ὁρᾶν γίγνεται το ἑρᾶν.
† το πλυτειν ἐϛιν ἐν τῶ χρῆσθαι.

jectures.

jectures. Sanctius, who never hesitates, is of opinion, that the word so called is an emblem of a supine or indolent man: for that, as the business of such a man must be done by others, so the office of the *supine* may be executed by various other phrases; *discedo lectum*, for example, by *discedo lecturus*, by *discedo ad legendum*, and by *discedo ut legam*. Priscian thinks, not less whimsically, that the Supine, being placed in grammars at the bottom of the verb, seems to support the whole weight of the conjugation; like a man lying *supine*, or with his face upwards, and pressed down to the earth by a huge pile of burdens. — But however mysterious their name may be, the nature of the two Latin supines is very well understood. Like the gerunds, they are no parts of the verb, but verbal nouns; the first ending in *um*, which is always of the accusative case, governed by *ad* understood, and preceded by a verb of motion; and the second in *u*, which is always of the ablative, governed by *in* understood, and preceded by an adjective: as *abiit (ad) deambulatum*; *facile (in) dictu*. So they are explained by the most accurate of all Latin Grammarians, Ruddiman.

I shall now give some account of the several species or sorts of verbs, and so conclude this part of the subject.

In all the languages I know, and probably in all others, Verbs are of different sorts.

Exclusive of the verb of existence, which is of a peculiar character, and has been already described, they may all be divided into Active, Passive, and Neuter.

1. As human affairs depend upon Action, and as human speech is employed on human affairs, it must happen, in all possible conditions wherein we can be placed, that affirmations will often be made in regard to actions. Verbs, therefore, which affirm concerning action, and which are called *Active*, there must be in all languages; as *I love*, *thou blamest*, *he strikes*, *they pursue*.

2. Every created being that *acts* is liable *to be acted upon*: and what we suffer, or feel, from being acted upon, that is, from being the *subjects* or the *objects* of action, must be of great importance to life and happiness, and therefore cannot fail to be spoken of, under the form of affirmation, and so render *Passive* verbs necessary; as *thou art loved*, *I was blamed*, *he is stricken*, *they are pursued*. In the Classick tongues, the greatest part of the passive Verb (or Passive Voice, as it is also called) is formed from the active, by a change of termination; as *amor*, I am loved, from *amo*, I love; * *tuptomai*, I am beaten, from † *tuptô*, I beat. But, in the modern tongues of Europe, the Passive verb is made up of the participle passive, expressing the attribute,

* τυπτομαι. † τυπτω.

and

and of the verb of exiſtence denoting the affirmation and the time; as *Amor, I am loved*; *Culpabitur, he will be blamed.*

When the name of the being that acts, or the pronoun which ſtands for that name, leads the ſentence, the verb, aſſuming its nature, is active; as *Cæſar ſubegit Galliam*, Ceſar ſubdued Gaul. When the being which is acted upon, that is, when the ſubject, or when the object of the action, leads the ſentence, the verb is Paſſive, as *Gallia ſubacta eſt a Cæſare*, Gaul was ſubdued by Ceſar.

I diſtinguiſhed between the ſubject, and the object, of an action; and there is reaſon for doing ſo in this place. The *ſubject* of an action is affected by the action; the *object* of the action is not ſo affected. Thus, when I ſay, I hear a ſound, I ſee a man, *man* and *ſound* are the *objects*; and when I ſay, I build an houſe, I break a ſtone, *houſe* and *ſtone* are the *ſubjects*, of the action. The firſt is called *intentional* action, the ſecond is called *real.* Both are expreſſed by active verbs. For, though in the actions called intentional we are partly paſſive, becauſe an impreſſion is made upon us; yet there is an energy on our part, as we may exert our will and employ our organs, for the purpoſe, either of receiving that impreſſion, or of excluding it.

Active verbs are ſubdivided into *Tranſitive* and *Intranſitive*. An active tranſitive verb is ſo called, becauſe the action ſignified by it *paſſes from* the agent *(tranſit)* towards ſome other perſon or thing; as, I *ſee* a man, I *build* an houſe. This verb, therefore, is naturally placed between two ſubſtantives; the firſt denoting the agent, which is of the nominative caſe, becauſe there is nothing to make it of any other; and the ſecond, denoting the perſon or thing, towards which the action is exerted; and which, in languages that have caſes, is commonly of the accuſative, though ſometimes alſo of the genitive, the dative, or the ablative, according to the arbitrary rules of the language; as, *Potitur rerum, favet amico, utitur fraude.* —In the modern tongues, which have little or no variety of caſes, that which acts is naturally put before the verb, (for the agent is always prior to the action, as the cauſe to the effect) and that which is acted upon is put after the verb; as, Achilles ſlew Hector: and, in alluſion to the terms of Greek and Latin grammar, we call the firſt the nominative, and the laſt the accuſative; though they derive theſe names, not from their inflection (for they have none), but merely from their poſition, or from their dependence upon the verb. Sometimes, however, where the ſenſe cannot be miſtaken, or where we have an oblique caſe, we may change this order, for the ſake of harmony,

of

of energy, or of variety; and put the nominative after the accuſative, or even after the verb: as, Him they ſlew; Me they inſulted; Created thing nor valued he, nor ſhun'd.

When one acts upon, or towards, any object, that object is Paſſive in regard to the action: and, therefore, all theſe active tranſitive verbs may be changed into paſſives, when that which is acted upon leads the ſentence; as *Ego laudo te*, I praiſe thee; *Tu laudaris a me*, thou art praiſed by me.

An Active *Intranſitive* verb is that whoſe action *does not paſs* from the agent to any other perſon or thing; as I live, I run, I walk. This ſort of verb cannot properly take an accuſative after it, becauſe the actions have nothing exteriour to the agent upon which they can be ſaid to be exerted; nor, conſequently, can it be changed into a paſſive, becauſe, where actions are not exerted upon, or towards, any thing, there is nothing paſſive in regard to thoſe actions.—Intranſitive verbs are by moſt authors called *Neuter*, that is *neither* active nor paſſive: but I think with very little propriety. Paſſive indeed they are not; but ſurely it will not be pretended, that in running, walking, flying, &c. there is no action.—When they take an accuſative after them, as *vivere vitam felicem*, to live a happy life; *ire longam viam*, to go a long journey, they put off the Intranſitive character, and are to be referred to the other claſs of active

verbs; and their place may be ſupplied by verbs tranſitive. Thus, to *live* a happy life, *vivere vitam felicem*, is the ſame with *degere vitam felicem*, to *lead* a happy life: and, to *go* a long journey, is the ſame with, to *perform* a long journey.

3. That is properly a *Neuter* verb, which affirms neither action nor paſſion; but ſimply denotes the ſtate, poſture, or quality, of things or perſons; as *Sto*, I ſtand; *manes*, thou remaineſt; *dormit*, he ſleeps; *floremus*, we are flouriſhing; *albetis*, ye are white; *mortui ſunt*, they are dead. It is obvious, that theſe verbs, like thoſe of the former ſpecies, can neither take accuſatives after them, nor be transformed into paſſives; becauſe, where there is no action, nothing can be acted upon. True it is, that in ſome languages, both neuter and intranſitive verbs are uſed in the paſſive *impersonally*: but this is an idiom, depending, not on the nature of things, but on the arbitrary rules of thoſe languages; and beſides, when this is done, whatever the *form* of the verb may be, the *ſignification* is not neceſſarily paſſive. Thus *ſtatur* may mean *ſtant*; *curritur*, *currunt*; *turbatur*, *eſt turba*; *pugnatur*, *pugnant*.

Theſe, I think, are all the ſorts of verbs that are neceſſary in language, and, conſequently, all that Univerſal Grammar has to conſider. But, in the Greek and Latin grammars, other kinds of verbs are ſpecified; which

which I ſhall give ſome account of, though a very brief one. For, firſt, they do not properly come within my plan; and ſecondly, they may all, in reſpect of ſignification, be referred to one or other of the claſſes already mentioned.

When the ſame being that acts is alſo the ſubject or object of the action, the verb may be called *Middle*; as Acteon *ſaw himſelf* in the ſtream, Cato *ſlew himſelf*. This, in moſt languages, may be expreſſed by an active verb governing the reciprocal pronoun: but, antiently, it ſeems, the Greeks expreſſed it by a particular ſeries of inflections, that have been called by Grammarians *the middle voice*. Few examples, however, of reciprocal action ſignified by this middle verb, can now be produced, except from the earlieſt authors *. In latter times, it came to reſemble the Deponent of the Latins; having a ſignification purely active, though, in ſome tenſes, a paſſive termination.

The Hebrews have a form of the verb, or, as it is called, a Conjugation, which reſembles in its uſe the old middle verb of the Greek tongue. Thoſe of their Grammarians, who reject the vowel-points as a rabbinical and modern invention, reduce the

* See Hom. Il. iii. 141, xiii. 168. Odyſſ. v. 491, ix. 296.

conjugations to five, which they name *Kal*, *Niphal*, *Hiphil*, *Hophal*, and *Hithpael*. Theſe five may be reduced to three; for *Kal* and *Niphal* are but the active and paſſive voices of the ſame verb; and ſo are *Hiphil* and *Hophal*. *Hithpael* has no paſſive.

In *Kal* we have the primitive verb, as *maſar*, *tradidit*, *he delivered*: for, among the Hebrews, the third perſon ſingular of the preterit is the root of the verb. In *Hiphil* ſomething of Cauſation is implied; as *himſir*, *tradere fecit*, *he cauſed to deliver*.

Hithpael is the form, that correſponds to the old Greek middle verb: as *hithmaſer*, *tradidit ſe*, *he delivered himſelf*. This at leaſt is its moſt common ſignification. In neuter verbs, however, it differs not materially from the conjugation *Kal*: *halach* and *hithhalach* both ſignify *ambulavit*, *he walked*. And ſometimes it emphatically expreſſes *aſſuming the appearance* of a character without the reality. "There is, ſays Solomon, *mith-*
"*ghaſher*, that maketh himſelf rich, yet
"hath nothing: there is *mithroſheſh*, that
"maketh himſelf poor, yet hath great
"riches."

It may be remarked here, though foreign from the ſubject, that in certain Engliſh neuter verbs of Saxon original ſomething is diſcernible, not unlike the analogy of the He-

Hebrew conjugations *Kal* and *Hiphil*. *To ſit, to lie* *, *to riſe, to writhe, to fall*, are neuters, that might be referred to the former conjugation; to which correſpond the following actives in *Hiphil*, *To ſet, to lay* *, *to raiſe, to wreathe, to fell*, that is, *to cauſe to ſit, to*

* Is it not ſtrange, that, in the preſent language of England, not only in converſation, but even in ſome printed books of conſiderable name, the neuter *to lie*, and the active *to lay* ſhould be ſo frequently confounded; and that, inſtead of *he lies* on the ground, and *he lay* on the ground, it ſhould be ſaid *he lays*, and *he laid?* Would not a man of education be aſhamed to be found ignorant of the difference between an active and a neuter verb? Or could he think it creditable to miſtake *jecit*, *he threw*, for *jacuit*, *he lay?* Yet this vulgar idiom is not leſs barbarous. If the humour of confounding active verbs with neuter ſhould continue to prevail, we may ſoon expect to ſee, and to hear, ſentences like the following: "I *laid* in "bed till eight; then I *raiſed*, and *ſet* a while in a chair; "when on a ſudden a qualm came on, and I *felled* upon "my face."—Our life muſt come to an end; but let us live as long as we can: our language may alter; but let us wiſh it permanent, and do our beſt to make it ſo.

Pope has in one place, for the ſake of a rhyme, admitted this barbariſm. Priam, *lying* at Achilles's feet, ſays, Iliad xxiv,

> For him, through hoſtile camps I bent my way,
> For him, thus proſtrate at thy feet I *lay*:

which is the more provoking, becauſe it is in one of the fineſt paſſages of the poem, and in a paſſage where, in general though not throughout, the Tranſlator has the honour to outdo his original. It might have been eaſily avoided.

> For him, through hoſtile camps I paſs'd, and here
> Proſtrate before thee in the duſt appear.

cauſe

cauſe to lie, to cauſe to riſe, to cauſe to writhe, to cauſe to fall.

Inceptive verbs are appropriated to the beginnings of action, or rather of condition; as *caleſco*, I begin to be warm; *tumeſco*, I begin to ſwell. In Latin, they are often productive of elegance, by preventing circumlocution; but they are not found in the Greek, nor are they neceſſary in any language.

Equally unneceſſary, though not leſs elegant, are the Greek and Latin *Deſideratives*, which ſignify deſire; as * *brôſeiô*, *eſurio*, I deſire to eat; † *polemêſeiô*, *bellaturio*, I have a deſire to go to war.

Deponent verbs, which with an active ſignification have a paſſive termination, as *loquor*, I ſpeak; and *Neutral-paſſive* verbs, which have an active termination and a paſſive ſignification, as *vapulare*, to be whipped, *veneunt*, they are ſold, are not uncommon in the Latin tongue. The former are ſaid to have their name from *deponere*; becauſe they *lay aſide* that paſſive ſenſe, which one would expect from their final ſyllables.—The verb *liceo* is a very ſingular one; for with an active termination it has a paſſive ſenſe, and with a paſſive termination an active ſenſe: *Liceor* means, I offer a price; and *Liceo*, I am valued or ſet at a price.

* Βρωσειω. † πολεμησειω.

The

The Latin *Frequentative* verb denotes frequency: as *pulſo*, I ſtrike often, which is an active tranſitive; *curſito*, I run often, which is an active intranſitive; and *dormīto*, I ſleep often, which is neuter. This verb is not neceſſary; but, like the inceptive and the deſiderative, it contributes ſomething to that elegant conciſeneſs, which is ſo peculiarly the character of the Roman language.

Impersonal verbs are uſed only in the third perſon ſingular; and in Greek, Latin, and Italian, never appear with a nominative before them: as * *dei*, *oportet*; *exeſti*, *licet*; *baſta*, it is enough; the perſon, concerning whom they affirm, being expreſſed by an oblique caſe dependent on the verb; as *intereſt omnium*, all are concerned; *licet tibi*, you may, or it is allowed you; *penitet me*, I repent; *mi baſta*, it is ſufficient for me. The Engliſh verbs, *it behoves*, *it irketh*, *it becomes*, are alſo called Impersonal by our Grammarians; and do indeed reſemble the Greek and Latin impersonals in two reſpects, that they are only uſed in the third perſon ſingular; and that they expreſs the perſon, concerning whom they affirm, by a ſubſequent or dependent oblique caſe: for we cannot ſay, *I behove*, or *thou behoveſt*; but we ſay, *It behoves me*, *it behoves thee*. But theſe Engliſh impersonals differ from the antient in this, that they have always before them a nomi-

* δει—ἐξεστι.

a nominative expreſſed: for, *behoves me, irks me, becomes me,* without the pronoun *it* prefixed, are not according to the Engliſh idiom.

It has been diſputed, whether the Greek and Latin Impersonal verbs are always dependent on a nominative underſtood or expreſſed: and by very able Grammarians the matter has been decided in the affirmative. Thus, to *refert omnium, negotium* or *res* is the ſuppoſed nominative: and *delectat me ſtudere* ſeems to be nothing different from *ſtudere delectat me*; where *ſtudere,* the infinitive noun, is properly the nominative to *delectat.* The controverſy is foreign from my purpoſe, and therefore I will not enter upon it. I ſhall only obſerve, that among the Latin Grammarians it was carried on with a vehemence that is ridiculous enough. Priſcian had ſaid, that all Impersonal verbs are really Perſonals, becauſe they have nominatives, which, whether expreſſed or not, are ſtill implied. He was anſwered by Auguſtinus Saturnius, in the following terms: "May the Gods confound you, Priſcian, "together with that ſame doctrine of yours" —and he goes on to urge his objections. "Nay but," replies Sanctius, "may the "Gods confound you, Auguſtine, together "with thoſe cavillings of yours; for I do "maintain, that Priſcian is in the right:"— which in the ſequel he endeavours to prove.

Ruddiman, who had more ſenſe, as well as more temper, than any of theſe wiſe men, obſerves very coolly and properly, that, whatever be determined concerning the ſuppoſed nominative of impersonal verbs, this we are ſure of, that it never can be a *perſon*, but muſt always be a *thing*: for which reaſon, the verbs in queſtion are called *Impersonal*; a name, that conveys a pretty juſt idea of their nature.

SECT. V.

The Subject continued.—Further Remarks on the Participle.

THAT the Participle expreſſes a quality or attribute with time, has more than once been taken for granted in the courſe of this inveſtigation, and is generally admitted by Grammarians. Ruddiman, one of the moſt cautious of them, declares it to be eſſential to the Participle, firſt, that it come immediately from a verb, and, ſecondly, that in its ſignification it include time. And therefore, continues he, *larvatus*, maſked, is not a participle, becauſe it comes from a noun, and not from a verb; and *tacitus*, ſilent, though it comes from a verb, is not a participle, becauſe it does not ſignify time *. And all the writers on Univerſal Grammar that I am acquainted with concur in the ſame doctrine.

And this is, perhaps, the moſt convenient light, in which the Participle can be conſidered in Univerſal Grammar: for it is not eaſy, nor, I believe, poſſible, to deſcribe it more minutely, without entering into the idioms of individual tongues. In fact, the

* Rudiments of the Latin tongue, page 62.

par-

participles of ſome languages differ widely in their nature from thoſe of others: and even, of one and the ſame language, ſome participles ſeem to be of one character, and ſome of another.

1. As the firſt Grammarians drew all their ideas from the Greek tongue, in which there are participles correſpondent to the preſent, preterit, and future tenſes; it was natural for them to ſuppoſe preſent time to be included in the participle of preſent time (as it is called), paſt time in the preterit participles, and future time in the participles of the future. And this being once ſuppoſed by the acuteſt of all Grammarians, the Greek, might naturally be admitted unexamined, or but ſlightly examined, by their brethren of other countries, and of latter ages.

But the Greek participles of the preſent do not always expreſs preſent time; nor is paſt time always referred to by their preterit participles: nay, on ſome occaſions, time ſeems not to be ſignified at all, by either the former, or the latter. When Cebes ſays, *Etunchanomen peripatountes en tô tou Chronou hierô* *, We *were walking* in the temple of Saturn, the participle of the preſent, *walking*, is by means of the verb, *were*, applied to time paſt, (which an adjective in the ſame connection might have been); and therefore of

* Ετυγχανομεν περιπατοῦντες εν τῶ τυ χρονυ ἱερω.

itſelf

itſelf cannot be underſtood to ſignify any ſort of time. If one chooſe to affirm, that the participle thus applied muſt ſignify time: then the words *at a walk*, or the adjective *merry*, muſt alſo ſignify time, when it is ſaid, We were *at a walk* in the meadow, or, We were *merry* in the meadow;—which no body, I think, will maintain.—Again, When we read in the Goſpel, *Ho piſteuſas ſôthêſetai* *, the participle belongs to the aoriſt of paſt time, and the verb is of future time; yet we muſt not render it, "He who believed ſhall "be ſaved:" for it appears from the context, that the believing here ſpoken of is conſidered as poſteriour in time to the enunciation of the promiſe. Here, therefore, the participle loſes the ſignification of paſt time: and may be rendered, by the indefinite preſent, "He *who believeth* ſhall be ſaved;" or by the future, (which often coincides in meaning with the indefinite preſent) "He "*who will believe* ſhall be ſaved;" or merely by a noun, which in its ſignification is not connected with time, "*The believer* ſhall be "ſaved."—Can it be ſaid then, that the participle in this place neceſſarily implies any ſignification of time, when we ſee, that its full import may be expreſſed, either by preſent, or by future time, or without any reference to time paſt, preſent, or future?—Greek, as well as Latin and Engliſh, parti-

* Ὁ πιϛευσας σωθησεται. See Mark xv. 16.

ciples,

ciples, often take the ſignification of nouns, and conſequently loſe that of time: as * *ho peirazôn*, the tempter, *ho kektêmenos* †, the maſter, or proprietor.

2. In Latin, the future participle of the active verb does indeed expreſs future time: *Scripturus*, about to write. But the future participle of the paſſive, in *dus*, "does not "ſo much import futurity" (I quote the words of Ruddiman) "as neceſſity, duty, "or merit. For there is a great difference "between theſe two ſentences, *Dicit literas* "*a ſe ſcriptum iri*, and *Dicit literas a ſe* "*ſcribendas eſſe*; the firſt ſignifying, that "a letter will be written by him, or that "he will write a letter; and the ſecond, "that a letter muſt be written by him, or "that he is obliged to write a letter. For "(continues our Author) though Sanctius "and Meſſ. de Port Royal contend, that "this participle is *ſometimes* uſed for ſimple "futurity, yet I think, that Perizonius and "Johnſon have clearly evinced the con-"trary:" ‡—that is, I preſume, that it is *never* uſed for ſimple futurity.

The Latin active participle of preſent time is frequently uſed to denote a quality ſimply, and as it is at all times, or without reference to any particular time; in which

* ὁ πειραζων. † ὁ κεκτημενος.
‡ Rudiments of the Latin tongue, page 47.

caſe, it aſſumes the nature of an adjective, or perhaps even of a noun: as *amans æqui*, a lover of equity; or, one whoſe general character it is at all times, that he loves equity.

The Latin paſſive participle of paſt time (as it is called) may likewiſe, by loſing all ſignification of time, become an adjective; as in the words *doctus*, *eruditus*, *ſpectatus*, *probatus*, &c.: and is ſometimes, by means of the ſubſtantive verb, applied even to future time in that tenſe, which is commonly called *the future of the ſubjunctive*, but which ought to be called *the future perfect of the indicative*: *amatus fuero*, I ſhall have been loved.

It appears then, that of the Greek and Latin Participle it is not enough to ſay, that "it is a word derived from a verb, "and denoting an attribute with ſome ſigni-"fication of time." But this definition will be found ſtill more inadequate, when applied to the participles of the modern languages.

3. In Engliſh (and what is ſaid of the Engliſh participle will in general hold true of the French and Italian):—in Engliſh, I ſay, we have but two ſimple participles; which are here exemplified by *writing*, and *written*. For *about to write*, or *going to write*, is a complex, and indeed a figurative, way

way of expreſſing the import of a Latin and Greek participle, *grapſon*, and *ſcripturus*.

The firſt, *Writing*, is the participle of the active verb; the other, *Written*, is the participle of the paſſive: I *am writing* a paragraph; but *it is not yet written*. It may be added, that the former ſignifies *imperfect action*, or action begun and not ended; *I am writing* a ſentence: and that the latter ſignifies *action complete*, *perfect*, or *finiſhed*; the ſentence *is written*.—This appears to be a leſs exceptionable way of diſtinguiſhing them, than if it had been ſaid, that the former expreſſes *preſent time*, and the latter *time paſt*.

But, of itſelf, does not the firſt denote preſent, and the ſecond paſt, time? I anſwer, No. Let us examine them in their order.

By the firſt participle, *Writing*, when joined to a verb of preſent time, preſent action is no doubt ſignified: but it is ſignified, not by the participle, but by the tenſe of the verb; for the ſame participle, joined to a verb of a different tenſe, may denote either paſt or future action;—we may ſay, not only *I am writing*, but alſo, *I was writing* yeſterday, and *I ſhall be writing* tomorrow. Nor let it be ſuſpected, that this par-

ticiple varies its time, when joined to the ſubſtantive verb only. It may be joined to other verbs, and ſtill admit the ſame variety: he *went* away *muttering*; he *will return ſmiling*; he *walks* about *meditating*.

The ſecond, *Written*, which I call the paſſive participle, may be thought to be naturally enough referred to paſt time, becauſe it expreſſes complete action: for an action is certainly paſt, when it is compleated. But this participle may, for all that, be referred to preſent time, and to future, as well as to paſt. The letter *is now written*: it *was written yeſterday*: it *will be written tomorrow*. Is not the time, in theſe examples, ſignified by the verb *is*, *was*, and *will be*, as really as in the following; the ſea *is now calm*: it *was calm yeſterday*: it *will be calm tomorrow?* If then, in the former ſentences, the participle *written* ſignify an attribute with time, the adjective *calm*, in the latter examples, muſt alſo ſignify an attribute with time: in which caſe, it will be difficult to diſtinguiſh between the nature of the adjective, and that of the participle. But, ſuppoſe the participle *written* to be *paſſive*, and to ſignify *complete action*; and it may, in its nature, be eaſily diſtinguiſhed from the adjective *calm*, which does not imply either *action received*, or *action compleate*.

But

But if *Written* be a paſſive participle, why do we meet with it in the compound tenſes of the active verb; in the preterperfect, *I have written*; in the pluſquamperfect, *I had written*; and in the future perfect, *I ſhall have written?* This queſtion will not appear of hard ſolution, if we vary a little the order of theſe auxiliaries. Inſtead, then, of, I have written a letter, I had written a letter, and I ſhall have written a letter, ſay, *I had a letter written, I have a letter written*, and, *I ſhall have a letter written*; an order, which, on ſome occaſions, and on ſubjects that admit a more harmonious phraſeology, might be tolerated in verſe: and it will appear, that the participle *written* belongs, not to the nominative *I*, the perſon *who acts*, but to the accuſative *letter*, the thing *acted upon*, or (to give it in other words) the thing which in reſpect of the action is *paſſive*.

That this is a true ſtate of the caſe, and no arbitrary ſuppoſition, may appear from the analogy of other modern languages. In French, wherever the participle is *declined*, it agrees in gender and number, not with the agent, but with the thing acted upon: as, *La harangue* que j'ai *faite*, and, *Les vers* que j'ai *faits*; not *fait* in either caſe. The ſame holds in Italian. *

* So in Diodati's Bible. Geneſ. iii. 12, 13. Ed Adamo diſſe, La *donna che* tu hai *poſta* meco, &c.—E la Donna riſpoſe, I ſerpente *m'* ha *ſoddotta*, &c.

If it be aſked, whence this mode of ſpeaking could take its riſe; it may be anſwered, that in the barbarous Latin uſed in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (when the modern tongues began to aſſume their preſent form) it was not uncommon, inſtead of *Amavi illum*, I have loved him, and *Scripſi literas*, I have written the letter, to ſay *Habeo illum amatum*, and *Habeo ſcriptas literas*. The new languages adopted the idiom. Or perhaps the idiom paſſed from the new languages into the barbarous Latin of that time.

As the paſſive participle *written*, when combined with the active auxiliaries *have* and *had*, ſupplies tenſes in the active verb, I have written, I ſhall have written, I had written: ſo, when combined with the active participle *having*, the ſame paſſive participle forms an active preterperfect participle. For *having written* is as really ſuch in Engliſh, as * *gegraphôs* is in Greek. And this, being further combined with the perfect participle of the ſubſtantive verb *been*, ſupplies a preterperfect paſſive participle, *having been written*, which exactly correſponds to the Greek *gegrammenos* †. The ſame perfect participle paſſive *written*, joined with the imperfect active participle of the ſubſtantive verb, *being*, makes a preſent perfect participle paſ-

* γεγραφως. † γεγραμμενος.

ſive,

ſive, *being written*, which gives the meaning of the Greek * *graphomenos*.

One of the greateſt defects in the Engliſh tongue, with regard to this part of ſpeech, ſeems to be the want of an *imperfect paſſive participle*. For example: If it be aſked, What is your friend doing? and anſwered, He *is building* a houſe; this is right: for the imperfect active participle, with the preſent tenſe of the ſubſtantive verb, expreſſes properly enough *action juſt now going on, but not finiſhed*. But if to the queſtion, Is your friend's houſe built? the anſwer, which is not uncommon, be given, No, but it is building; this is not right, becauſe a paſſive ſenſe is ſignified by an active participle. We muſt, therefore, in this caſe, if we would ſpeak grammatically, vary the phraſe, and ſay, No, but he is building it; or ſomething to that purpoſe.

In old Engliſh, this defect was ſometimes ſupplied by prefixing the prepoſition *in* to the active participle: as, "Forty and ſix "years was this temple *in building*." But this would now appear formal; and indeed, in the caſe ſuppoſed, hardly intelligible: The houſe is not built, but it is *in building*.

In the original Greek, of the paſſage quoted in the laſt paragraph from the ſecond

* γραφομενος.

chapter of St. John's Goſpel, the verb is of the firſt aoriſt paſſive; which, it ſeems, might ſignify imperfect and continued action, as well as indefinite paſt time. In Latin, it might be rendered, according to the idea which our Tranſlators muſt have had of it, *Quadraginta et ſex annos hoc templum ædificabatur.* For that this is the true grammatical ſenſe of the imperfect paſſive, though not always adhered to by Roman writers, we have the authority of Ruddiman.*

If

* The indicative tenſes of the Paſſive Latin verb are thus diſtinguiſhed by that moſt accurate Grammarian.—
" Let the ſubject of diſcourſe be the building of a houſe.
" 1. When I ſay *Domus ædificatur*, I mean that it is juſt
" now a building, but not finiſhed. 2. When *Ædifi-*
" *cabatur*, that it was then, or at a certain paſt time,
" a building, but not then finiſhed. 3. *Ædificabitur*,
" that ſome time hence it ſhall be a building, without any
" formal regard to the finiſhing of it.—But when I make
" uſe of the *Participle perfect*, I always ſignify a thing
" compleated and ended: but with theſe ſubdiſtinctions.
" 1. By *Ædificata eſt*, I mean ſimply, that it is finiſhed;
" without any regard to the time when. 2. *Ædificata*
" *fuit*, it is finiſhed; and ſome time ſince has intervened.
" 3. *Ædificata erat*, it was finiſhed at a certain paſt time
" referred to, with which it was contemporary. 4. *Ædi-*
" *ficata fuerat*; it was finiſhed before a certain paſt time
" referred to, to which it was prior. 5. *Edificata erit*,
" it ſhall be finiſhed ſome time hereafter, either without
" regard to a particular time when; or with reſpect to
" a certain time yet future, with which its finiſhing ſhall
" be contemporary. 6. *Ædificata fuerit*, it ſhall be finiſhed
" and paſt before another thing yet future, to which its
" finiſhing ſhall be prior."—The Author then goes on to ſhow, which he does in a very ingenious and ſatisfactory manner,

If the Participle eſſentially implies time, it would not be eaſy to give a reaſon, why neuter verbs ſhould not, as well as active, have participles both of preſent time, and of paſt. According to the common theory, *dormiens*, ſleeping, is the preſent participle of a neuter verb: but where is the preterit participle? Of active verbs we have participles of either ſort; *amans*, loving, *amatus*, loved; *audiens*, hearing, *auditus*, heard, &c. But of *dormio*, I ſleep, *ſedeo*, I ſit, *floreo*, I flouriſh, though there are participles of preſent time (as they are called) *dormiens*, ſleeping, *ſedens*, ſitting, *florens*, flouriſhing, there are none of paſt time. And yet, theſe attributes may be ſpoken of as paſt, as well as preſent. He ſlept, he ſat, he flouriſhed, may be ſaid, as well as, he ſleeps, he ſits, he flouriſhes.

How is this difficulty to be ſolved? By rejecting the common theory, and adopting what is here offered. Call the one participle *Active*, and the other *Paſſive*: and then, what is more eaſy, than to ſay, that to Neuter verbs, which can never be Paſſive, no paſſive participle can ever belong?

Excepting, therefore, the Greek participles, which are more numerous, and perhaps leſs underſtood, than thoſe of other

manner, how it comes to paſs, that theſe tenſes are ſo often uſed promiſcuouſly by Latin writers. See *Rudiments of the Latin Tongue*, page 45.

tongues; may we not, from what has been ſaid, infer, that Participles, *as expreſſing the attribute of the verb without affirmation*, ought to be diſtinguiſhed, not into thoſe of paſt, preſent, and future time, but into, 1. *Active and imperfect*, which ſignify action, or condition, begun, continuing, and unfiniſhed, as *ſcribens*, writing, *dormiens*, ſleeping: 2. *Paſſive* and *Perfect*, which denote action complete, as *ſcriptus*, written: and, 3. *Future*, expreſſive of action, or condition, which is to commence, but has not yet commenced, as *ſcripturus*, about to write, *dormiturus*, about to ſleep, and (if you pleaſe) *ſcribendus*, about to be written.

If now it be aſked, in what reſpects the adjective differs from the participle: I anſwer, firſt, that the former, though it may be derived from a verb, (as *tacitus*, ſilent, from *taceo*) is not, like the participle, neceſſarily derived from it: and, ſecondly, that thoſe *varieties* of expreſſion and form, which relate to the *continuance*, *completion*, and *futurity*, of *action* and *condition*, and which belong eſſentially to the participle, are not characteriſtical of the adjective. Other diſtinctions might be ſpecified, but theſe are ſufficient. — The Adjective denotes a quality ſimply: the Participle denotes a quality, together with ſeveral other conſiderations relating to the continuance, completion, and futurity, of action and condition.

Theſe remarks were reſerved to this place: becauſe, without the knowledge of ſome things in the two laſt ſections, they could not be underſtood. If, on account of the unavoidable repetition of certain technical terms, the reader ſhould find them in any degree obſcure, he needs not be diſcouraged; as none of either the foregoing, or the ſubſequent, reaſonings depend upon them.

SECT. VI.

The ſubject of Attributives continued.— Of Adverbs.

THE Greek word * *Epirrhêma*, which anſwers to *adverb*, properly ſignifies ſomething *additional to an attributive*: for, as was already obſerved, all ſorts of attributives, the adjective and participle as well as the verb, were called † *rhêmata*, or verbs, by the antient grammarians. In this etymology of the name, we partly diſcern the nature of an Adverb. It is a word joined to attributives; and commonly denotes ſome circumſtance, manner, or quality, connected with their ſignification.

Adverbs are joined—to verbs, as *fortiter pugnavit*, he fought *bravely*;—to participles, as *graviter ſauciatus*, *grievouſly* wounded;—to adjectives, as *egregie fidelis*, *remarkably* faithful. They are joined even to nouns: but, when this happens, the noun will be found to imply the meaning of an attributive; as when Livy ſays, *admodum puella*, *very much* a girl, the ſenſe plainly is, a girl *very young*. Adverbs are alſo joined to adverbs: for the circumſtances, manners, or

* ἐπιῤῥῆμα. † ῥήματα.

qualities,

qualities, denoted by this part of ſpeech, may themſelves be characteriſed by other circumſtances, manners, or qualities; as *multo minus audacter, much leſs boldly*; *ſat cito* ſi *ſat bene, ſoon enough* if *well enough*.

Some grammarians conſider the adverb as a ſecondary attributive; or, as a word denoting the attribute of an attribute. Theodore Gaza ſays, that it is, as it were, the verb's epithet or adjective: and Priſcian obſerves, that, when added to verbs, it has the ſame effect which an adjective has when joined to a noun. And that this is a true character of many adverbs, cannot be denied: for which reaſon I have referred this part of ſpeech to the chapter of Attributives. A verb, adjective, or participle cannot be where a ſubſtantive is not, either expreſſed or underſtood: and an adverb is equally dependent on its *verb*. When I ſay, Ceſar fought valiantly; the attribute *fought* is characteriſed by the adverb *valiantly*, as Ceſar the perſon is by the verb *fought*. Agreeably to this notion of Adverbs, it would be eaſy to ſpecify a great number of them, which limit, enlarge, or otherwiſe modify, the meaning of the verbs, participles, adjectives, and adverbs, to which they are joined: as, he walked *much*, he walked *little*, he walked *ſlowly*, *quickly*, *gracefully*, *awkwardly*, &c.;—he was wounded *ſlightly*, *grievouſly*, *mortally*, *incurably*, *dangerouſly*;—*more* brave, *leſs* brave, *prudently*

prudently brave, *oſtentatiouſly* brave, &c.;—bravely, *more* bravely, *moſt* bravely, *very* bravely, *much leſs* bravely, &c.

Many adverbs there are, however, which do not ſo properly mark the attributes of attributes, as ſome remoter circumſtance attending an attribute or our way of conceiving it, and ſpeaking of it. Such are the ſimple affirmative and negative *yes* and *no*.—Is he learned? No. Is he brave? Yes. Here the two adverbs ſignify, not any modification of the attributes *brave* and *learned*; but a total negation of the attribute, in the one caſe; and, in the other, a declaration that the attribute belongs to the perſon ſpoken of.—Such alſo are thoſe adverbs, of which in every language there is a great number, that denote *time*, *place*, *certainty*, *contingency*, and the like: as, he is *here*, he will go *to-morrow*, he will *certainly* come, he will *probably* ſpeak. For, when I ſay, "He goes "*ſlowly*," I expreſs by the adverb a certain modification of going;—but when I ſay, "he will go the day after this day," or, "he will go *tomorrow*," I ſay nothing as to the *mode* of going, nor do I characterize the attribute *going* at all; I only ſay, that, at ſuch a time, *going* will be the attribute, or the action, of ſuch a perſon.

Adverbs are indeed applied to many purpoſes; and their general nature may be better underſtood by reading a liſt of them, than by

by any deſcription or definition. Moſt of them ſeem to have been introduced into language, in order to expreſs by one word the meaning of two or three: *in what place*, for example, by *where?*—*to what place*, by *whither?*—*in a direction aſcending*, by *upward*; —*at the preſent time*, by *now*;—*at what time*, by *when?*—*at that time*, by *then*;—*many times*, by *often*;—*not many times*, by *ſeldom*; —*it is done as it ſhould be*, by *well* done;—*it is done with wiſdom*, by *wiſely* done;—*it is certain that* he will come, by he will *certainly* come, &c. Even *yes* may be expreſſed by circumlocution, without an adverb; as, Are you well? *Yes*; that is, *I am well.* And, where the predicate of a negative propoſition may be ſupplied by a word of contrary meaning, *No* or *Not* may be diſpenſed with, and the propoſition becomes poſitive: Are you ſick? *No:* that is, I am well;—He is *not* preſent, that is, he is abſent.

In Hebrew, though there are ſeveral adverbs of negation, there is no affirmative adverb anſwering to *yes*. *Yea* occurs only once in the Engliſh Old Teſtament, namely, in the third chapter of Geneſis, where it has a different meaning. The defect is always ſupplied by a periphraſis, in the way here hinted at: as, Is he well? *He is well.* The Latin ſeems originally to have been deficient in the ſame reſpect. *Ita*, *etiam*, and *maxime*,

are,

are, when uſed in this ſenſe, elliptical circumlocutions.

Hence it appears, that adverbs, though of great uſe, becauſe they promote brevity, and conſequently energy, of expreſſion, are not among the moſt eſſential parts of language; becauſe their place might be ſupplied in almoſt all caſes, by other parts of ſpeech. However they are found in great abundance, in moſt languages: whence we may infer, that it is natural for men to have recourſe to them on certain occaſions.

Adverbs expreſſive of quality are in Greek, Latin, Engliſh, &c. almoſt innumerable. In Hebrew, they are not very many; but the want is eaſily ſupplied. The maſculine of the adjective is often uſed adverbially; *tob* is *bonus* and alſo *bene*; *Rang* is both *malus* and *male*:—which is ſometimes done in Engliſh; as when *right*, *wrong*, *ill*, *well*, &c. are uſed adverbially, as well as for adjectives. But this want the Hebrews more commonly ſupply by a prepoſition and a noun: for *truly*, they ſay *in truth*; for *righteouſly*, *in righteouſneſs*. Even in adjectives they do not greatly abound. They ſay, *God of juſtice*, inſtead of *juſt God*; and *throne of glory*, inſtead of *glorious throne*. We often do the ſame: we may ſay indifferently, either a wiſe man, a wealthy man, a courageous man, &c.

&c. or a man of wiſdom, of wealth, of courage, &c.

I ſaid, that Adverbs promote energy of expreſſion. But this happens only when they promote brevity too, and are ſparingly uſed, and choſen with judgement. A ſuperabundance of them, or of adjectives, makes a ſtyle unwieldy and tawdry. For it is from its nouns, rather than from its attributives, that language derives ſtrength: even as a building derives ſtability rather from the walls and rafters, than from the plaſtering, wainſcotting, and painting. Young writers, however, are apt to think otherwiſe; and, with a view to invigorate their expreſſion, qualify every verb with an adverb, and every noun with an epithet. And ſo, their compoſitions reſemble a houſe, whoſe walls are ſupported by poſts and buttreſſes; which not only make it unſeemly to the eye, and inconvenient by taking up too much room, but alſo juſtify a ſuſpicion, of weakneſs in the work, and unſkilfulneſs in the architect. Such a period as the following will explain what I mean. "I am honeſtly, ſeriouſly, "and unalterably of opinion, that nothing "can poſſibly be more incurably and em-"phatically deſtructive, or more deciſively "fatal, to a kingdom, than the introduc-"tion of thoughtleſs diſſipation, and the "pomp of lazy luxury." * Would not the

* *The pomp of lazy luxury*—a phraſe of Lord Shafteſbury's.

full import of this noiſy ſentence be better expreſſed thus: "I am of opinion, that "nothing is more ruinous to a kingdom, "than luxury and diſſipation?"—Now obſerve, that in the former there are eight adverbs and four adjectives, and in the latter one adjective, and one adverb. If two garments are ſufficient for elegance and uſe, who would burden himſelf with twenty? But this by the by.

Some authors affirm, that adverbs may be found in all the ten *Categories*; and think, that the moſt effectual way of arranging them, is to refer them to the ſeveral categories to which they belong. The Categories, or, as they are called in Latin, the Predicaments, are ten general heads of diviſion, to which Ariſtotle and his followers ſuppoſed, that every thing, or idea, conceivable by the human underſtanding, might be reduced. They are as follows. 1. Subſtance. 2. Quantity. 3. Quality. 4. Relation. 5. Action. 6. Paſſion. 7. Time. 8. Place. 9. Situation. 10. Habit; or, the being Habited *. This arrangement was long

* "Cornelius was forced to give Martin ſenſible "images. Thus calling up the coachman he aſked him "what he had ſeen at the bear-garden. The man an-"ſwered, he ſaw two men fight a prize; one was a fair "man, a ſergeant of the guards; the other black, a "butcher: the ſergeant had red breeches, the butcher "blue: they fought upon a ſtage about four o'clock,

"and

long conſidered as Perfect; but has fallen into diſrepute, ſince the Peripatetick philoſophy began to decline. It muſt be owned, however, that, if we arrange the Adverbs according to it, we ſhall have a pretty extenſive idea of their nature, and of the various purpoſes to which they may be applied. But this has never been done, ſo far as I know, by any grammarian; and therefore I am apprehenſive, that the following attempt may be found erroneous.

1. Under *Subſtance*, the firſt category, may be comprehended ſuch adverbs as *Eſſentially*, *ſubſtantially*, *ſpiritually*, *corporeally*, *angelically*, *Socratically*, &c.

2. Under *Quantity*, the ſecond, may be arranged thoſe adverbs, that denote extenſion, or number. Of the former ſort are, *much*, *greatly*, *exceedingly*, *enough*, *almoſt*, *ſcarcely*, and the like. Of the latter are, *once*, *twice*, *thrice*, *ſecondly*, *thirdly*, *fourthly*, &c.

3. *Quality*, the third category, is, according to Ariſtotle, of four ſpecies: compre-

" and the ſergeant wounded the butcher in the leg.
" Mark, quoth Cornelius, how the fellow runs through
" the predicaments. Men, *ſubſtantia*; two, *quantitas*;
" fair and black, *qualitas*; Sergeant of the guards and
" Butcher, *Relatio*; wounded, *actio et paſſio*; fighting,
" *ſitus*; ſtage, *ubi*; four o'clock, *quando*; blue and red
" breeches, *habitus*."—If the reader is unacquainted with the categories, this example will be a help to his memory.

hending, first, Intellectual habits, to which correspond such adverbs as *virtuously*, *vitiously*, *wisely*, *valiantly*, *foolishly*, &c.; secondly, Natural powers of the mind or body, to which may be referred *powerfully*, *sensibly*, *willingly*, *forcibly*, *feebly*, &c.; thirdly, Qualities perceived by sense, expressed, adverbially, by *softly*, *warmly*, *coldly*, *loudly*, *sweetly*, *clearly*, &c.; fourthly, Figures of things with or without life, to which class we may refer, *elegantly* (shaped), *circularly*, *triangularly*, &c.

4. The adverbs that signify *Relation* (the fourth predicament) are of various kinds. They express, first, Resemblance, as, *so*, *thus*; secondly, Contrariety, as, *otherwise*, *differently*, *contrariwise*, &c.; thirdly, Order, as, *afterwards*, *next*, *first*, *secondly*, &c.; fourthly, Coexistence, or Assemblage, as, *together*, *jointly*, &c.; fifthly, Separation, as, *separately*, *diversely*, *only*, *chiefly*, *especially*, *singularly*, &c.; sixthly, Cause and Effect, as, *therefore*, *consequently*, &c.

5. *Action* is the fifth category: and, as there are many sorts of it, so are there many classes of adverbs to express it. As, first, Bodily action, *swimmingly*, *snatchingly*, *cursim*, *carptim*, &c.: secondly, Mental action,—as desire, *utinam*, *O that*;—denying or forbidding, *no*, *not*;—assuring, *indeed*, *certainly*, *undoubtedly*;—granting, as *well* (be it so);—affirming, as *yes*, *truly*;—preferring,

as

as *rather*, *especially*;—doubting and conjecture, as *perhaps*, *possibly*, *probably*;—interrogation, in regard, first, to time, as *when?* secondly, to place, as *where?* thirdly, to quantity, as *quantum*, *quot*, how much, how many? fourthly, to quality, as *how*, *quomodo?* — Motion, as *swiftly*, *slowly*, &c.;— Rest, as *quietly*, *silently*, *still*.

6. Adverbs belonging to the sixth category, and expressive of *Passion*, are, *confusedly*, *distractedly*, *feelingly*, and the like.

7. Those that belong to the seventh, which is *Ubi*, or *Place*, are very numerous, and by Ruddiman are divided into five classes. They signify, first, in a place, as *where? here:* secondly, to a place, as *whither? hither:* thirdly, towards a place, as, *backward*, *forward*, *upward*, *downwards*, &c.: fourthly, from a place, as *whence? hence*, *thence:* fifthly, by or through a place, as (in Latin) *qua? hac*, *illac*, *alia*, which, however, are no adverbs, but pronouns of the ablative case, to which *viâ* is understood.

8. The eighth predicament, *when?* or *time*, may be supposed to comprehend all the adverbs of time; which are also very numerous, and may be divided into, first, those of time present, as *now*, *today*: secondly, those of time past, as, *then*, *yesterday*, *lately*: thirdly, those of time future, as, *presently*, *immediately*, *tomorrow*, *not yet*: fourthly,

thoſe of time indefinite, as *when*, *ſometimes*, *always*, *never*: fifthly, thoſe of continued time, as, *long*, *how long*, *long ago*: ſixthly, thoſe of repeated time, as, *often*, *ſeldom*, *again*, *now and then*, &c.

9. *Situation*, or *Poſition*, the ninth predicament, has not many adverbs belonging to it. *Supinely*, however, is one: and, *obliquely*, *pronely* (if there be ſuch a word) *ſideways*, &c. may be others.

10. The tenth, *Habitus*, denotes ſomething additional and exterior to a ſubſtance, but not a part of it; as a diadem, a coat, a gown, &c. There are not in any of the languages I know (ſo far as I remember) adverbs of this ſignification; ſuch ideas being moſt commonly expreſſed by nouns, as, he wore a cloak, his head was encircled with a diadem. Yet I do not deny the reality of ſuch adverbs; and it is poſſible I may have met with them, though they do not now occur. If the Engliſh idiom would allow the word *ſuccinctly* to have its original meaning, it might perhaps be an adverb of the tenth category; as in this example, He was dreſt *ſuccinctly*, that is, in garments tucked up:—but this is not Engliſh; nor is *ſuccincte* in Latin ever uſed in any other ſenſe, than that of *briefly*, or *compendiouſly*.—By the by, I cannot ſee, for what purpoſe Ariſtotle made a ſeparate category of the tenth; for to me it ſeems included in ſome

of

of the preceding. A *crown* is as really a *ſubſtance*, as the head that wears it, and may laſt a thouſand years longer *. Or, if it is *the having* of the crown, or *the being crowned*, that diſtinguiſhes the category, as when we ſay, *a crowned head*, then *crowned* denotes a quality perceived by ſenſe, and ſo belongs to the third predicament. Indeed this is not the only objection that might be made to the doctrine of the categories. Whoever treats of it in the way of detail, and without prejudice, will find, if I miſtake not, that in ſome things it is redundant, and in others defective. Wiſhing, however, to give in this place ſome account of that celebrated diviſion; as it was for many ages believed to be the foundation of all human ſcience; I choſe to arrange the adverbs by categories, rather than according to that ſimpler (though not leſs comprehenſive) ſcheme, which is given by the learned and accurate Ruddiman in his Rudiments of the Latin tongue.

Since this was written, PHILOSOPHICAL ARRANGEMENTS have been publiſhed; a work of uncommon erudition; in which the doctrine of the Categories is unfolded at large, with great preciſion of language, and

* "The greateſt difficulty was, when they came to "the tenth predicament. Crambe affirmed, that his "*habitus* was more a *ſubſtance* than he was; for his "cloaths could better ſubſiſt without him, than he with-"out his cloaths." *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus.*— Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat?

in a ſtyle as entertaining, as can well be applied to arguments ſo abſtracted, and of ſo little uſe. I ſay, Of ſo little uſe: for after all that the ingenious and elegant author has advanced, I am ſorry to be obliged to declare, that in this doctrine I ſee little more, than an elaborate ſolution of trifling difficulties made on purpoſe to be ſolved: as conjurors are ſaid to have raiſed ghoſts, and other ſhadowy bugbears, merely to ſhow their addreſs in laying them. It may have been a convenient introduction to the verbal part of the Greek philoſophy, and to the art of ſophiſtical declamation: but of its tendency to regulate the underſtanding, to illuſtrate moral truth, or to promote the improvement of art, or the right interpretation of nature, I am not ſenſible at all. This is ſaid, not with any view to detract from others; but only to account for my own conduct, in diſmiſſing, after ſo ſlight an examination, that celebrated part of antient literature.

As to the formation and derivation of adverbs, it depends ſo much on the idiom of particular languages, that one cannot enter upon it, without going beyond the bounds of Univerſal Grammar.

CHAP. III.

Of INTERJECTIONS.

THE Interjection is a part of ſpeech in all the languages known to Europeans. Whether it be in all others, is not certain. For, though it have its uſe, and may often promote pathos or energy, we cannot ſay, that it is ſo neceſſary, as the noun, the pronoun, or the attributive. Its place might indeed be ſupplied, in moſt caſes, by other words, if the cuſtoms of ſociety would permit. I am ſorry, conveys the ſame meaning with *alas!* though perhaps not ſo emphatically: but the defect of emphaſis may be owing to nothing more than this, that the one expreſſion is leſs common than the other on certain occaſions. In like manner, without being miſunderſtood, we might ſay, inſtead of *fye!* I diſlike it, or, I abhor it; and, inſtead of *ſtrange! (papæ!)*, I am ſurpriſed, or, I am aſtoniſhed, might be uſed with no bad effect.

The name *Interjection* expreſſes very well the nature of this part of ſpeech. It is a word *thrown into* diſcourſe *(interjectum)* in order to intimate or expreſs ſome emotion of the mind: as, I am, *alas!* a miſerable ſinner:

ſinner: *fye, fye!* let it not be heard of: *well done! (euge!)* thou haſt proved thyſelf a man. It is, indeed, as Ruddiman obſerves, a compendious way of conveying a ſentence in a word, that the ſhortneſs of the phraſe may ſuit the ſuddenneſs of the emotion or paſſion expreſſed by it.

For Interjections are not ſo much the ſigns of thought, as of feeling. And that a creature, ſo inured to articulate ſound as man is, ſhould acquire the habit of uttering, without reflection, certain vocal ſounds, when he is aſſaulted by any ſtrong paſſion, or becomes conſcious of any intenſe feeling, is natural enough. Indeed, by continual practice, this habit becomes ſo powerful, that in ſome caſes we ſhould find it difficult to reſiſt it, even if we wiſhed to do ſo. When attacked by acute pain, it is hardly poſſible for us not to ſay *ah!* or *alas!*—and, when we are aſtoniſhed at any narrative or event, the words, *ſtrange! prodigious! indeed!* break from us, without any effort of the will.

In the Greek Grammar, Interjections are referred to the claſs of adverbs; but, I think, improperly. They are not adverbs in any ſenſe of the word. They expreſs not the attributes of attributes; nor are they joined to verbs, to participles, or to adjectives, as adverbs are; nor do they limit or modify the ſignification of attributives in any reſpect what-

whatever. The Latin grammarians have, therefore, done better, in ſeparating the interjection from other parts of ſpeech, and giving it a particular name. And in this they are followed by all who have written grammars of the modern tongues.

It has been ſaid, that interjections are the remains of thoſe barbarous cries, by which (according to the Epicurean ſyſtem) the firſt men expreſſed their feelings, before the invention of the art of ſpeech. But I deny, that Speech is an art, in this ſenſe of the word. I cannot conceive, how a ſet of mute, ſavage, and beaſtly creatures ſhould on a ſudden commence philoſophers, and form themſelves into an academy, or meet together in a large cave, in order to contrive a ſyſtem of words, which, without being able to ſpeak themſelves, they afterwards taught their dumb and barbarous brethren to articulate. Orpheus, performing at a publick concert, for the entertainment of lions, tygers, and other wild beaſts of quality; or Amphion making the ſtones and trees dance to the ſound of his harp, till, after many awkward bounces and caperings, they at laſt took their ſeats, in the form of towns and caſtles, are in my judgment as reaſonable ſuppoſitions. It admits of proof, from the nature of the thing, as well as from hiſtory, that men in all ages muſt have been ſpeaking animals; that

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the young learned the art by imitating their elders; and that our firſt parents muſt have ſpoken by immediate inſpiration. *

Some grammarians maintain, that the interjection is no part of ſpeech at all, but a mode of utterance common to all nations, and univerſally underſtood:—in other words, that *fye*, *alas*, *buzza*, *euge*, *apage*, *eh*, *bien*, *ahilaſſo*, &c. are as common, and as intelligible, over the whole earth, as a diſpleaſed, a ſorrowful, a joyful, or an angry countenance. It is ſtrange, thoſe authors did not recollect, that, if we except O! Ah! and one or two more, the interjections of different languages are as different as their nouns or verbs: *ai* in Greek being expreſſed by *eheu* in Latin, and in Engliſh by *alas!*—and *woes me!* being in Latin *hei mihi*, and in Greek *oimoi*. Some interjections indeed may be borrowed by one nation from the language of another; thus *apage* and *euge* are the ſame in Latin and in Greek. But ſome nouns and verbs are, in like manner, borrowed by one nation from another; yet we do not ſuppoſe, that ſuch words, becauſe current in Greece, Italy, and England, are univerſally intelligible, or form any part of that language, which, in contradiſtinction to *artificial*, I have formerly deſcribed under the name of *natural*. †

* See Part i. chap. 6. † Part i. chap. 1.

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Interjections, though frequent in diſcourſe, occur not often in elegant compoſition. Unpractiſed writers, however, are apt to exceed in the uſe of them, in order, as they imagine, to give pathos to their ſtyle: which is juſt as if, in order to render converſation witty or humourous, one were to interrupt it with frequent peals of laughter. The appearance of violent emotion in others does not always raiſe violent emotion in us: our hearts, for the moſt part, are more effectually ſubdued by a ſedate and ſimple utterance, than by interjections and theatrical geſture. At any rate, compoſure is more graceful than extravagance; and therefore, a multitude of theſe paſſionate particles, will generally, at leaſt on common occaſions, ſavour more of levity than of dignity; of want of thought, than of keen ſenſation. In common diſcourſe this holds, as well as in writing. They who wiſh to ſpeak often, and have little to ſay, abound in interjections, *wonderful*, *amazing*, *prodigious*, *fye fye*, *O dear*, *Dear me*, *hum*, *hah*, *indeed*, *Good life*, *Good Lord*, and the like: and hence, the too frequent uſe of ſuch words tends to breed a ſuſpicion, that one labours under a ſcantineſs of ideas.—In poetry, certain ſuperfluities of language are more allowable than in proſe; yet ſome elegant Engliſh poets are at pains to avoid interjections. Tragick writers are often intemperate in the uſe of them. We meet with entire lines of

interjections in the Greek plays. But it is yet more provoking to see an English tragedian endeavour to work upon the human heart by such profane expletives, as Flames and furies! Damnation! Heaven and earth! not to mention others of still greater solemnity. If the poet has no other way to make up his verse, or to show that his hero is in earnest, I would recommend to him the more harmless phraseology of Fielding's *Tom Thumb*,

Confusion! horror! murder! guts! and death!

Interjections denoting imprecation, and those in which the Divine Name is irreverently mentioned, are always offensive to a pious mind: and the writer or speaker, who contracts a habit of introducing them, may without breach of charity be suspected of profaneness. To say, with a devout mind, God bless me, can never be improper: but to make those solemn words a familiar interjection expressive of surprise or peevishness, is, to say the least of it, very indecent.

As to common oaths and curses, I need not say any thing to convince my reader, that they are utterly unlawful, and a proof that the speaker has at one time or other kept bad company. For to the honour of the age let it be mentioned, that profane

swearing

ſwearing is now more generally exploded in polite ſociety, than it uſed to be in former times. In this reſpect, as in many others, the wits of Charles the ſecond's reign were moſt infamous. Queen Elizabeth was addicted to ſwearing: and moſt of our old kings and barons are ſaid to have diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the uſe of ſome one particular oath, which was in their mouths continually. There is a great deal of this ribaldry in the poems of Chaucer.

In the antient Grammars we have adverbs of ſwearing, and interjections of imprecation: nay, I think I have been told formerly, that in Latin, and in Greek too perhaps, there are oaths for men, and oaths for women; and that if either ſex invade the privilege of the other in this matter, it is a violation of the laws of ſwearing, and of grammar. Swearing ſeems to have been more frequent in the Grecian dialogue, than in the Roman. Almoſt every affirmation in Plato may be ſaid to be depoſed upon oath.

One interjection, we are told, expreſſes laughter. But it is rather a mark in diſcourſe, to denote, that the ſpeaker is ſuppoſed to laugh in that place. For if, inſtead of the inarticulate convulſion which we call laughter, one were to pronounce thoſe three articulate ſyllables, *ha ha he*, the effect would

be

be ridiculous. Laughter is no part of ſpeech, but a natural agitation, common to all mankind, and univerſally underſtood.

It is needleſs to ſubjoin a liſt of Interjections, as they are but few, and may be ſeen in any common grammar.

CHAP. IV.

Of Connectives and Articles.

EVERY individual word, which is comprehended under the ſeveral ſpecies hitherto mentioned, conveys ſome idea to the mind, even when pronounced ſeparate. Thus *love*, the noun, *lovely*, the adjective, *loveſt*, the verb, *loving*, the participle, *lovingly*, the adverb; thus the pronouns *I*, *thou*, *he*, *that*, *this*, *ſhe*, *they*, &c.; and thus the interjections, *alas*, *fie*, *ſtrange!*—have, each of them, ſome meaning.

But ſome ſorts of words there are, which, like ciphers in arithmetick, have no ſignificancy when ſeparate, though when joined to other words they are very ſignificant. Thus, *from*, *in*, *and*, *with*, *the*, convey no idea. But when I ſay, "He came *from* London, "*in* the chariot, *with* a friend *and* ſervant," the ſenſe is compleat; and is made ſo by theſe little words; which are now ſo important, that, if we leave them out, and ſay, "He "came London the chariot a friend ſervant," we ſpeak nonſenſe.

It may be obſerved, that there are in this ſentence two other little words, that of themſelves mean nothing, *a* and *the*, but which, when connected as above, are found to be

uſeful,

uſeful, though not abſolutely *neceſſary*. For, if we ſay, " He came from London in cha- " riot with friend and ſervant," there is a meaning; which, though awkwardly expreſſed, according to the idiom of our tongue, may however be gueſſed at; and which, rendered literally into Latin, Venit Londino in curru cum amico et ſervo, is neither awkward nor ungrammatical.

Thoſe words, therefore, which become ſignificant by being connected with other words, may be divided into two claſſes; the *Neceſſary* and the *Uſeful*. The former we call *Connectives*; the latter *Articles*. Of which in their order.

SECT. I.

Of CONNECTIVES.

EVERY thing that is a Connective in language muſt connect either words or ſentences, that is, either ideas or affirmations. When I ſay, "He came from home," the word *from* connects two words, *came* and *home*: when I ſay, "He came from home, "and he comforted me," the word *and* connects two ſentences; the firſt, "He came "from home;" the ſecond, "He comforted "me." The former ſort of Connectives are termed *Prepoſitions*; the latter, *Conjunctions*.

§ 1. *Of Prepoſitions: with Remarks on the* Caſes.

The term *Prepoſition* ſignifies *placing before*: and it is true of almoſt all the words of this claſs, that they are, or may be, *put before* the word which they connect with ſomething previous: as, "The enemy armed "*with* darts, and mounted *on* horſes, fled "*from* us, *in* confuſion, *over* the plain, *to*-"*wards* the river, *at* the foot *of* the moun-"tains, *beyond* which they could not paſs."

A Prepoſition may be defined; "A part "of ſpeech, not ſignificant of itſelf, but of

" ſuch efficacy, as to unite two ſignificant " words, which, according to the nature of " things, or the rules of the language, could " not otherwiſe be united." The former part of this definition muſt be plain enough already: the latter may need illuſtration. Let us inquire then, what is meant by ſaying, " that ſome words, from the nature of " things, and others, by the rule of the lan- " guage, can be united in no other way, " than by prepoſitions."

Firſt, when things are intimately connected in nature, one would think, that the words which ſtand for them might eaſily coaleſce in language, without the aid of connectives. And ſo in fact they often do. No two things can be more cloſely united, than a ſubſtance and its quality; a man, for example, and his character. Theſe therefore of themſelves coaleſce in all the known languages: and we ſay, a *good man*, a *tall man*; *vir bonus*, *vir procerus*. Here prepoſitions are quite unneceſſary.—Further, there is a connection equally intimate between the agent and the action; for the action is really an attribute of the agent: and therefore we ſay, the *boy reads*, the *man walks*; the noun coaleſcing with the verb ſo naturally, that no other word is requiſite to unite them.—Moreover, an action, and that which is acted upon by it, being contiguous in nature, and mutually affecting each other, their names would ſeem

to

to be mutually attractive in language, and capable of coalescing without external aid; as, he *reads a book*, he *beats his breast*, he *builds an house*, he *breaks a stone*.—Further still; an attributive is naturally and intimately connected with the adverb which illustrates or modifies its signification: and therefore, when we say, he *walks slowly*, he is *very learned*, he is *prudently brave*, it is plain that no preposition can be necessary to promote the coalescence.—These few examples may suffice to show, that, from the very nature of things, some words may be, and are connected, without the aid of prepositions.

But, secondly, it is no less natural, that, to mark the connection of some other words, prepositions should be necessary. If we say, "the rain falls heaven;—the enemy ran the "river;—Creusa walked Eneas;—the tower "fell the Greeks;—she led him the house; "—Lambeth is Westminster-abbey;"—there is observable in each of these expressions, either a total want of connection, or such a connection as produces falsehood or nonsense: and it is evident, that, before they can be turned into sense, the gap must be filled up by some connecting word; as thus, "the rain falls *from* heaven;—the enemy "ran *towards* the river;—Creusa walked *be-*"*hind* Eneas;—the tower fell *upon* the "Greeks;—she led him *into* the house;—"Lambeth is *over against* Westminster-ab-"bey."

" bey."—We ſee then, how prepoſitions may be neceſſary to connect thoſe words, that in their ſignification are not naturally connected.

Thirdly; It was hinted, that, by the rule of certain languages, ſome words, though coaleſcing in ſenſe, cannot be connected in diſcourſe, without prepoſitions. When this happens, it is owing to ſome peculiar defect, or to ſome other peculiarity, in thoſe languages. For example: the inſtrument wherewith one performs an action muſt have a natural connection with that action; ſo natural indeed, and ſo intimate, that they cannot be ſeparated. The words, therefore, which ſtand for them, may, in languages that decline their nouns by caſes, be united without a prepoſition: as *Scribit calamo*. But, if a language has no caſes, or very few, it may ſo happen, that merely by ſubjoining the name of the inſtrument to the active verb we ſhall *not* be able to mark the connection. Thus, in Engliſh, " he " writes a pen," having no definite ſenſe, cannot mark connection, or any thing elſe. Here then, in our tongue, a prepoſition comes to be neceſſary to aſcertain a particular union of words, which, according to the Engliſh idiom, cannot be ſo conveniently united in any other way; and ſo we ſay, " he writes *with* a pen." I ſay,—" which " cannot be *ſo conveniently* united:" for that without

without a prepoſition the ſame ſenſe *may* be expreſſed, admits of no doubt; as, "he "writes, and a pen is the inſtrument." What then is the advantage of uſing prepoſitions in a caſe of this kind? The advantage is conſiderable: for by this ſimple expedient we ſignify in few words what would otherwiſe require many.—Again, in the Latin idiom, *Arguitur furti* has a definite meaning; the firſt word denoting accuſation, and the ſecond a crime; and the connection between them being marked by the caſe of the noun. But in Engliſh, "He "is accuſed theft," has no clear meaning; becauſe there is nothing to ſhow, how the words are connected, or whether they be connected or not. But, by means of a prepoſition (which ſupplies the want of a caſe) "He is accuſed *of* theft," we unite them together, and remove all doubt in regard to their ſignification.

The Latin Grammarians reckon up twenty-eight prepoſitions governing the accuſative caſe; fifteen that take the ablative; and four, that have ſometimes the one caſe, and ſometimes the other:—in all forty-ſeven. But ſeveral of theſe are ſuperfluous; ſome rarely occur; and a few are by the beſt Grammarians accounted adverbs rather than prepoſitions. Hence we may infer, that many prepoſitions are not neceſſary in language. Thoſe in our tongue hardly exceed thirty.

But it is to be obſerved, that almoſt every prepoſition we are acquainted with has more than one ſignification, and that ſome of them have ſeveral. The Engliſh *of*, for example, denotes *concerning*, as, A Treatiſe *of* human nature; denotes the matter of which a thing is made, as, a cup *of* ſilver; denotes the means, as, to die *of* hunger; denotes *among*, as, *Of* three horſes two were lame; denotes *through*, or, in conſequence of, as, It is *of* the Lord's mercies that we are not conſumed; denotes *from*, as, London is ſouth *of* York; denotes *out of*, as, *Of* this little he had ſome to ſpare; denotes *extraction*, as, Alexander the ſon *of* Philip; denotes *belonging to*, as, He is *of* the tribe of Judah; denotes *containing*, or *filled with*, as, a glaſs *of* wine, an hogſhead *of* ale;—and has ſeveral other ſignifications. In like manner, we might ſpecify thirty ſenſes of the prepoſition *for*; about twenty of *from*, and the ſame number nearly of *with*, *by*, and ſome others: for which I refer to Johnſon's Dictionary. Theſe varieties of meaning give trouble to thoſe who are acquiring a language; but are attended with no inconvenience, when one is maſter of it. So that we may repeat, that a ſmall number of prepoſitions are ſufficient for the ordinary purpoſes of life. In Greek, which is ſaid to be more perfect than any other tongue, there are only eighteen: moſt of which, however, vary exceedingly in their ſigni-

ſignification, according to the caſes that they govern, and according as they are uſed in a proper, or in a figurative, ſenſe.

For I ſpeak here of the *ſeparable* prepoſitions, which are diſtinct and complete words. Thoſe that are called *Inſeparable*, are not to be conſidered in Univerſal Grammar; being neither connectives, nor words, but only ſyllables, which generally add ſomething to the ſignification of thoſe words wherewith they are compounded, but never ſtand by themſelves: as (in Engliſh) *a*, *be*, *con*, *mis*, *de*, *dis*, &c. in the words, *abide*, *bedeck*, *conjoin*, *miſtake*, *decipher*, *diſpleaſe*, &c.

Prepoſitions, in their original and literal acceptation, ſeem all to have denoted Relations of place. This at leaſt is true (if I miſtake not) of all the Latin and Greek prepoſitions without exception, as well as of all the Engliſh. *Till*, indeed, or *until*, is now uſed of time only, as in this phraſe, "I never heard of him till this moment:" but antiently it had, and among the vulgar in Scotland it ſtill has, a more general ſenſe, being of the ſame import nearly with *to* or *towards*; as in this line of Spenſer,

He rouſed himſelf full blithe, and haſten'd *them until.*

Priſcian thinks, that the Latin *clam* is not, as it is commonly ſaid to be, a prepoſition, but rather an adverb; and aſſigns this reaſon among

among others, that it never has any reference to *place* in its ſignification.

The importance of prepoſitions, in marking, with equal brevity and accuracy, *relations in place*, will partly appear from the following ſentences. " He went *to* a city, " *at* the foot *of* the hill, *over againſt* a lake, " that ſtretches *before* a wide common. *On* " this ſide *of* the city, the road winds *about* " ſome great rocks, that riſe fifty feet *above* " the level of the plain, then goes ſtraight " *towards* the weſt, *among* buſhes, *between* " two little hills. When he came *within* " the walls, and had got *nigh* to the mar- " ket-place, *beneath* the citadel, the enemy " fled *from* him, *through* the ſtreets, *out of* " the city, and *along* the banks of the lake, " *without* their baggage, till they eſcaped " *in* boats *beyond* the river. He followed " *after*, and was not far *behind*, them; hav- " ing *with* him ſome friends, whom he had " brought *from* home," &c.

But, in all languages, Prepoſitions are uſed figuratively, to ſignify other relations, beſides thoſe of place. For example, as they who are *above* have in ſeveral reſpects the advantage of ſuch as are *below*, prepoſitions expreſſing high and low place are uſed for ſuperiority and inferiority in general: as, " he is *above* all diſguiſe;—he ſerves *under* " ſuch a captain;—he rules *over* the peo- " ple;—he will do nothing *beneath* his high " ſtation."

" ſtation."—— *Beyond* implies, not only diſtance of place, but alſo, that between us and the diſtant object ſomething intervenes, which is alſo at ſome diſtance; as, " he is " beyond ſea." But perſons, or things, ſo ſituated with reſpect to us, cannot be immediately in our power: and hence, *beyond* is uſed figuratively, and in general, to ſignify, *out of the reach*, or *out of the power of*: as " Goodneſs beyond thought,—Glo- " rious beyond compare,—Gratitude beyond " expreſſion."—Take another example. *By* denotes *nearneſs*; and *with*, *fameneſs*, of place: as " She was with him;—I found him cloſe " with Swift;—his dwelling is by the ſea; " —By the rivers of Babylon we ſat and " wept." Now they who are *with* us, or who are *by* us, that is, who are in our company, or who are near at hand, may co-operate with and aſſiſt us; but the former with a more immediate agency, and cloſer connection, than the latter. Hence that figurative uſe of the prepoſitions *by* and *with*, which is obſervable in ſentences like the following: He walks *with* a ſtaff, *by* moonlight; He was taken *by* ſtratagem; and killed *with* a ſword.— Put the one prepoſition for the other; and ſay, He walks *by* a ſtaff *with* moonlight: He was taken *with* ſtratagem, and killed *by* a ſword: and it will appear, that they differ in ſignification more than one at firſt view would be apt to imagine.

Hitherto

Hitherto I have conſidered prepoſitions as ſeparate words. But they are often prefixed to, ſo as to form a part of, other words; as *overvalue*, *undergo*, &c. in which caſe, they generally impart ſomething of their own meaning to the word with which they are compounded. And that this imparted meaning has in many caſes an alluſion to place, is well illuſtrated by Mr. Harris, in the following manner. "Suppoſe a given ſpace. "*E* and *ex* ſignify *out of* that ſpace; *per*, "*through* it, from beginning to end; *in*, "*within* it, ſo as not to reach the boun- "dary; *ſub*, *under* it. Hence, *E* and *Per* "in compoſition augment. *Enormis* is "ſomething not ſimply big, but big in ex- "ceſs, ſomething got out of the rule, and "beyond the boundary: *Dico*, I ſpeak, "*Edico*, I ſpeak out; whence *edictum*, an "edict, ſomething ſo effectually ſpoken, "as that all are ſuppoſed to hear and to "obey it: *Fari*, to ſpeak, *Effari*, to ſpeak "out; whence *effatum*, an axiom, or ſelf- "evident propoſition, addreſſed as it were "to all men, and calling for univerſal aſ- "ſent: *Permagnus*, *perutilis*, great through- "out, uſeful in every part.—On the con- "trary, *In* and *ſub* diminiſh and leſſen. "*Injuſtus*, *iniquus*, unjuſt, unequitable; "that *lies within* juſtice and equity, that "reaches not ſo far, that falls ſhort of them. "*Subniger*, blackiſh, *ſubrubicundus*, reddiſh;

"tending

" tending to black, and tending to red, but
" *under* the ſtandard, and *below* perfection."

So far Mr. Harris. I ſhall only add, that it is not eaſy to account for ſome coalitions of this nature; as, for example, the Engliſh compounds *underſtand* and *underſtanding*. It may, however, be offered, in the way of conjecture; that, as he who *ſtands under* a thing perceives its foundation, and how it is ſupported, and whether it be well ſupported; ſo he may be ſaid to underſtand a doctrine, who comprehends the grounds or evidences of it *. Many ſuch words there are in every language, to exerciſe the wit of the fanciful etymologiſt.

Words compounded with prepoſitions are very numerous in moſt tongues, but eſpecially in Greek. There we find prefixed to a word, not only one prepoſition, but frequently two, and ſometimes even three. Thus † *hupekproluein* is compounded of three prepoſitions (anſwering to *under*, *from*, and *forward*) and a verb ſignifying *to looſe*; and this word is uſed by Homer to denote the *unyoking* of mules, by drawing them *forward*, *from under* the chariot. Other languages may expreſs the ſame ideas by means of three or four words; but none, I be-

* Mr. Harris gives another etymology. See *Hermes*, page 371.

† υπεκπρολυειν. Odyſſ. vi, 88. See alſo Odyſſ. vi. 87.

lieve,

lieve, but the Greek, could expreſs them all in one. *

Some Engliſh prepoſitions change the meaning of verbs, by being put after them. Thus, to caſt, is to throw, but, to *caſt up*, is to compute, or calculate: to give, is to beſtow, but, to *give over*, is to ceaſe, to abandon, to conclude to be loſt: to knock, is to beat, but to *knock under* is a vulgar idiom denoting ſubmiſſion. So, to *take after*, to learn of, to reſemble; to *take off*, to copy, or mimick; to *take on*, to be much affected; to *take up*, to reform; to *take up with*, to be contented with; and innumerable others.

A prepoſition often loſes its connecting power, and becomes an adverb. Thus *round* is a prepoſition, when one ſays, He went round the walls; and an adverb when it is ſaid, I turned round, to ſee who called me. The ſame thing happens in other languages. There are two or three Latin words, of which it is doubted by the beſt Grammarians, whether they be adverbs or prepoſitions. But it is not every prepoſition that admits of ſuch a change. *Of*, *with*, *from*, and ſome others, are never adverbial.

* So λαμβανειν to take; καταλαμβανειν to take hold of; προκαταλαμβανειν to take hold of before another, to preoccupy; ἀντιπροκαταλαμβανειν, to preoccupy in oppoſition to anothet.

It may ſeem ſtrange, that, in the courſe of this long inquiry concerning the eſſentials of language, ſo little ſhould have been ſaid on the ſubject of CASES. The reaſon is, that Caſes are not eſſential to language. They are indeed of great importance in Greek and Latin: but a language may be ſignificant enough without them, or at leaſt with very few. We have no Caſes in Engliſh, except the addition of *S* in the genitive, as, "the Lords day;" and in the pronouns, *I, we, thou, ye, he, they, ſhe, it,* which in the oblique caſe become *me, us, thee, you, him, her, them.* And of our genitive in *S* it may be obſerved, firſt, that it is leſs in uſe now than formerly; and ſecondly, that it has ſometimes a meaning different from that of the other genitive formed by the prepoſition *of,* as in the above example; for, *the Lords day,* and *the day of the Lord,* are not ſynonimous; the former ſignifying *Sunday,* the latter, *the day of judgment,* or, a day in which God will manifeſt himſelf in an extraordinary manner. This however may be owing to the repetition of the definite article, which in the latter phraſe points out one particular day (or time) different from all others.

Thoſe varieties of ſignification, which in the Greek and Latin nouns are marked by caſes, are in Engliſh and the other modern languages of Europe marked, for the moſt

part,

part, by prepoſitions; ſuch as *of*, *to*, *for*, *by*, *with*, and *from*. Our nominative and accuſative, indeed, are known by their poſition, the firſt being put before the verb, and the laſt after: at leaſt this is the general rule; from which, however, writers, eſpecially poets, often deviate, (as already obſerved) when that can be done without perplexing the ſenſe.

In Hebrew, the caſe of the noun is marked by a change made, not in the end, but in the beginning of the word; and this change is plainly a prepoſition prefixed, but contracted in pronunciation. Thus *melech* is *a king*; *lemelech*, *to a king*; *mimelech*, *from a king*: *el* being the prepoſition that correſponds to the Engliſh *to*; and *min* being ſynonimous with *from*.

In the Erſe or Gaelick, the oblique caſe, correſponding to the Latin genitive, is characteriſed by a change in the vowel or diphthong of the laſt ſyllable; as *Oſſian*, Oſſian; *Oſſiain*, of Oſſian: *Sagard*, a prieſt; *Sagaird*, of a prieſt:—the accuſative being the ſame with the nominative; and the dative and ablative diſtinguiſhed (like our dative and ablative) by prepoſitions.

There is ſome inaccuracy in the doctrine of Caſes, as commonly received among Grammarians; ſo that it is not eaſy, nor perhaps poſſible, to expreſs the meaning of the word

caſe

caſe in a definition. For, what is it, that conſtitutes a caſe? Is it a peculiar termination, or inflexion of the noun? Then, firſt, in the plural of Latin nouns, there can be no more than four caſes, becauſe there are no more than four terminations; the dative being uniformly the ſame with the ablative, and the nominative with the vocative. And then, ſecondly, it cannot be ſaid, that there are, in any one of the declenſions, ſo many as ſix caſes of the ſingular: for, in the firſt, the genitive and dative agree in termination; in the ſecond, the dative and ablative; in the third, the nominative and vocative; in the fourth, the nominative, vocative, and genitive; and in the fifth, both the nominative and vocative, and the genitive and dative.

In fixing the number of their caſes, the Latin grammarians ſeem to have been determined by three conſiderations: firſt, by the termination or inflection; ſecondly, by the meaning, or the relation ſubſiſting between the noun and the word that governs it; and thirdly, by a regard to uniformity, or a deſire of giving the ſame number of caſes to the ſingular and to the plural, and of allowing as many to one declenſion, as to another. And I am inclined to think, that, by this method, though not ſtrictly philoſophical, both their declenſions and their ſyntax are rendered more intelligible, than they would have been upon any other plan.

If we admit the termination to be the ſole characteriſtick of a Caſe, then there are in Engliſh no more caſes, than the few above ſpecified. If caſes are to be diſtinguiſhed by the different ſignifications of the noun, or by the different relations which it may bear to the governing word, then we have in our language as many caſes almoſt, as there are prepoſitions: and, above a man, beneath a man, beyond a man, round about a man, within a man, without a man, &c. ſhall be caſes, as well as, of a man, to a man, and with a man. In fact, it can hardly be ſaid, that there are Caſes, in any ſenſe of the word, except in thoſe nouns that vary their terminations: and therefore, we may repeat, that there are no caſes in Engliſh, or very few; and that, conſequently, Caſes are not eſſential to language. For that, though the few we have were ſtruck out of the Engliſh tongue, it would ſtill be intelligible, though not ſo elegant, is a point, which can hardly admit of diſpute. In ſome parts of England, *ſhe* is uſed for *her*, and *we* for *us*, without inconvenience; the genitive in *S* is leſs frequent than that other genitive which is formed by the prepoſition *of*, and both are equally perſpicuous; and, *of I*, *to I*, *of thou*, *with thou*, *I ſaw he*, *I ſaw they*, if they were as common, would certainly be as well underſtood, as *of me*, *to me*, *of thee*, *with thee*, *I ſaw him*, *I ſaw them*.

The

The origin of the word *Caſe*, and of ſome other grammatical terms relating to nouns, is very oddly explained by ſome authors; but has plauſibility enough to deſerve notice. They tell us, that, among the moſt antient Greek Grammarians, a line falling perpendicularly was the ſymbol of the nominative caſe; and that lines falling, not perpendicularly, but with different degrees of obliquity, were conſidered as the ſymbols of the other caſes. Hence the firſt obtained the name of *Caſus rectus*, or *the erect caſe*; and the others were called *Caſus obliqui*, *the oblique caſes*: hence they were all denominated *Caſus*, or *Fallings*; and hence, an enumeration of the ſeveral caſes or fallings of the noun is known by the name of a *Declenſion*; becauſe it exhibits a ſort of declining progreſs, from the noun's perpendicular form, through its ſeveral ſymbolical obliquities.

If it were aſked, Whether a language with caſes, like the Greek and the Latin, or one, which, like the Engliſh, *declines* its nouns by prepoſitions, deſerve the preference; I ſhould anſwer; firſt, that in point of perſpicuity neither has any advantage over the other; *Regis*, *regi*, *rege*, of a king, to a king, with a king, being all equally intelligible:—and ſecondly, that the modern has more ſimplicity than the antient; becauſe he who can decline one Engliſh noun may, if he know the ſingular and plural termina-

tions, decline any other; which is by no means the cafe in the Latin and Greek.

But, thirdly, it muft be allowed, that the Claffick tongues derive from the inflection of their nouns a very great fuperiority, in refpect of elegance. For, firft, what they expreſs by one word *pennæ* (for example) we cannot expreſs by fewer than two, or perhaps three, *of pen*, *of a pen*, *of the pen*. Beſides, the varieties of termination in the Greek and Latin nouns contributes not a little to their harmony: while the unvaried ſound of our ſubſtantives, with the perpetual repetition of ſuch little words as *of*, *to*, *for*, *with*, &c. give a harſhneſs to the language, which would certainly be offenſive to an ear, that had long been inured to the modulation of the antient tongues.

But the chief advantage of diverſified termination, both in nouns and in verbs, conſiſts (as formerly hinted) in this, that it leaves the compoſer at liberty to place his words in any order, which he may think will moſt effectually promote variety, and energy, as well as harmony, of ſtile. Whereas, in the modern tongues, the relation that one word bears to another being in a great meaſure determined by their poſition, we are often confined to one particular arrangement; and, when we depart from that, and attempt thoſe deviations from the gramma-

tical

tical order which are ſo graceful in antient authors, are apt to write obſcurely and affectedly.—In this reſpect, however, the Engliſh tongue is more ſuſceptible of variety than the French, and Engliſh verſe than Engliſh proſe. Indeed, almoſt all arrangements of words, that do not perplex the ſenſe, are permitted in our poetry, eſpecially in our blank verſe: a privilege, whereof Milton availing himſelf in its full latitude, diſplays in the *Paradiſe Loſt* a variety and elegance of compoſition, which had never been equalled in any other modern tongue, and may bear to be compared with the moſt elaborate performances of antiquity.

Our want of inflection in our nouns, adjectives, and participles, makes us, in our written language, more dependent upon punctuation, than the antients were. Indeed, of punctuation, as we underſtand it, they had no idea: and it does not appear, that they ſuffered any inconvenience from the want of it. Whereas, in modern language, the miſplacing or omiſſion of a point will often alter the ſenſe: and, if we had no points, we ſhould find it difficult to write ſo as to be underſtood; to write elegantly, and yet intelligibly, would in that caſe be impoſſible. There is a paſſage in Cato; which, from being generally, if not always, miſpointed, is, I think, generally miſunderſtood:

The ways of heaven are dark and intricate,
Puzzled in mazes, and perplex'd with errors:
Our underſtanding traces them in vain,
Loſt and bewilder'd in the fruitleſs ſearch; &c.

Thus the lines are printed in all the editions I have ſeen. And yet, it can hardly be ſuppoſed, that Addiſon's piety would have permitted him to ſay, or to make Cato ſay, that "the ways of heaven are perplexed with er-"rors;" or that his taſte would have warranted ſuch an expreſſion as, "the ways of "heaven are puzzled." I therefore preſume, that the firſt line is a ſentence by itſelf, and ought to end in a point or colon; and that the ſequel, ranged in the grammatical order, amounts to this; "Our underſtanding, puz-"zled in mazes, and perplexed with errors, "traces the ways of heaven in vain:" which is both elegant and true. Now this ambiguity could not have taken place in Latin or Greek, nor indeed in French or Italian, even though there had not been one point in the ſentence: becauſe the participles *puzzled* and *perplexed* would have been made to agree with the ſingular noun *underſtanding*; in which caſe they could not alſo agree with the plural noun *ways*.

In explaining the ſeveral caſes, and ſhowing, why there are neither more nor fewer, and why ſo many, and what is the nature of each, ſome authors have been more particular,

ticular, and diſplayed greater ſubtlety, than in my opinion was requiſite. As to the number of caſes, grammarians have always differed in their ſentiments, and are not reconciled to this day. Many explode the ablative, becauſe the Greeks could do without it; and ſome will not allow the vocative to be a caſe, becauſe it is often, both in Latin and in Greek, the ſame with the nominative. Ariſtotle and the Peripateticks maintained, that the nominative is not a caſe; and the Stoicks were equally poſitive, that it is. In the Armenian language, the number of caſes is ſaid to be ten: and I ſhould not wonder, if a grammarian, much given to novelty and paradox, were to affirm, that there are in Engliſh as many caſes almoſt as there are prepoſitions. While opinions are ſo different in regard to the preciſe number, it is vain to inquire, why there are neither more nor fewer, and why ſo many.

The nature of each particular caſe may be better underſtood by examples, than by logical definition. Indeed, all the definitions I have ſeen of the ſeveral caſes are liable to objection; except, perhaps, that of the nominative, which is given by Mr. Harris, who calls it, "That caſe, without which there is "no regular and perfect ſentence."

"The Accuſative," ſays the ſame author, "is that caſe, which to an efficient nomi-"native, and a verb of action, ſubjoins,

" either the effect, or the paſſive ſubject :"— the effect, as when I ſay, *Lyſippus fecit ſtatuas*, Lyſippus made ſtatues; the ſubject, as in this example, *Achilles vulneravit Hectora*, Achilles wounded Hector.—But this, though frequently, is not univerſally true. When it is ſaid, *Antonius læſit Ciceronem*, the firſt word is an efficient nominative, the ſecond an active verb, and the third an accuſative, according to the definition: but when I ſay, *Antonius nocuit Ciceroni*, the efficient nominative and active verb are followed, not by an accuſative, but by a dative. And there are other verbs of active ſignification, as *Potior*, for example, which take after them, rarely an accuſative, ſometimes a genitive, and frequently an ablative. And what ſhall we ſay of accuſatives governed by prepoſitions; as *habitat juxta montem*, he dwells near the mountain? For neither is *habitat*, *he dwells*, an active verb; nor is the mountain, in any ſenſe of the words, either the ſubject or the effect of his dwelling; and yet *montem*, the mountain, is the accuſative.

The Genitive, according to the ſame learned writer, expreſſes all relations commencing *from* itſelf; and the Dative, all relations tending *to* itſelf. Yet, when I ſay, *editus regibus*, deſcended of kings, I expreſs a relation commencing *from* the kings, who are, notwithſtanding, of the ablative caſe, in the Latin: and *eripuit morti*, he reſcued from death,

death, is in Latin dative, and expreſſes, for all that, a relation tending, not *to* death, but *from* it.—One may ſay indeed, that theſe are refinements in the language, and deviations from the primitive ſyntax. But I know not, how we are to judge of caſes, except from the purpoſes to which they are applied in the languages that have them; nor on what authority we have a right to ſuppoſe, that the primitive ſyntax of Greek and Latin was different from that which we find in Greek and Latin authors.

In a word, every caſe, almoſt, is applied to ſo many purpoſes in ſyntax, that to deſcribe its uſe in a ſingle definition, ſeems to be impoſſible, or at leaſt ſo difficult, and withal ſo unneceſſary, that it is not worth while to attempt it. None of the antient grammarians, ſo far as I know, has ever made the attempt: and I believe it will be allowed, that in this ſort of ſubtlety they are not inferiour to their brethren of modern times.

§ 2. *Of Conjunctions.*

I divided Connectives into two claſſes; Prepoſitions, which connect words, and Conjunctions, which connect ſentences.

A Conjunction may be thus defined: "A "part of ſpeech, void itſelf of ſignification, "but of ſuch efficacy, as to join ſentences "together,

" together, and ſhow their dependence upon " one another." The Conjunction, ſays Ariſtotle, makes many *one*: and Ammonius compares the words of this claſs to thoſe pegs and nails by which the ſeveral parts of a machine are united.

Perhaps it may be thought, that Conjunctions, as well as prepoſitions, do ſometimes connect words; as when we ſay, He is a learned *and* a wiſe *and* a good man. But this ſentence, when analyſed, will be found to conſiſt of three diſtinct ſentences;—he is a learned man;—he is a wiſe man;—he is a good man; or,—he is learned,—he is wiſe,—he is good: which three would for ever remain diſtinct and ſeparate, if we had no connecting words to unite them in one ſentence; even as the ſeveral parts of a ſhip would remain ſeparate, if we had no pegs or nails to faſten them together. So, when it is ſaid, Peter and John went to the temple, it may ſeem, that the conjunction *and* connects only the two names *Peter* and *John*: but it really connects two ſentences,—Peter went to the temple,—John went to the temple; for unleſs we ſuppoſe the words, *went to the temple*, to belong both to Peter and to John, the expreſſion has no meaning.

In this account of the Conjunction, Scaliger, Sanctius, Voſſius, Urſinus, and Mr. Harris agree. But Perizonius is of opinion, and Ruddiman ſeems to think, that conjunctions

junctions do ſometimes connect words, and not ſentences; as in examples, like the following: Saul *and* Paul are the ſame: This book coſt a ſhilling *and* more: There is war between England *and* France. Each of theſe, no doubt, is one ſentence, and, if we keep to the ſame phraſeology, incapable of being broken into two. For, if inſtead of the firſt we ſay, "Saul is the ſame—Paul is the "ſame," we utter nonſenſe; becauſe the predicate *ſame*, though it agrees with the two ſubjects in their united ſtate, will not agree with either when ſeparate. If we ſay, inſtead of the ſecond, "This book coſt a "ſhilling—this book coſt more," we ſpeak with little meaning, or at leaſt inaccurately. And, inſtead of the third, if we ſay, "There "is war between England — there is war "between France," we fall into nonſenſe as before; becauſe the prepoſition *between*, having a neceſſary reference to more than one, cannot be uſed where one only is ſpoken of.

Yet, from theſe and the like examples, I do not ſee that any exception ariſes to the general idea of this part of ſpeech, as expreſſed in the definition. For in each of theſe a double affirmation ſeems to be implied; and two affirmations certainly comprehend matter ſufficient for two ſentences. If, therefore, not one of the examples given can, in its preſent form, be reſolved into

two,

two, it muſt be owing, not to the want of ideas, but to ſome peculiarity in the expreſſion. Let us, then, without adding any new idea, change the expreſſion, and mark the conſequence.

The firſt example, "Paul *and* Saul are "the ſame," is very elliptical. Its ſeeming import is, either that two different names are the ſame name, which cannot be; or that two different perſons are the ſame perſon, which is equally abſurd. To expreſs the whole thought, therefore, in adequate language, we muſt ſay, "Paul and Saul are "names that belong to one and the ſame "man." And this plainly comprehends two ſentences: Saul and Paul are names,—Saul and Paul belong to one and the ſame perſon. *

In the ſecond example, are plainly implied two affirmations, and conſequently two ſentences. "This book coſt a ſhilling"—(which is true, though not the whole truth) and—"This book coſt more than a ſhilling."

Even three affirmations, and of courſe three ſentences, may be ſuppoſed to be comprehended in the third example. "France "is at war—England is at war—They are "at war with one another." Taking it in another view, we may ſay, that here one aſſertion is made concerning the one country, and another of the ſame import con-

* See Part i. Chap. 1. Sect. 2.

cerning

cerning the other, and that there muſt by conſequence be ideas to furniſh out two affirmative ſentences: "England is at war "with France—France is at war with Eng-"land."

In ſome ſentences of this nature, the conjunction may be conſidered as ſuperfluous. Where this happens, the meaning may be expreſſed in one ſentence, without the aid of any conjunction: as, Peter went with John to the temple: Saul is the ſame with Paul.

Copulative conjunctions, therefore, where they are not quite ſuperfluous, (as if we were to ſay, I ſaw twenty *and* four men, inſtead of twenty four), will I think be found in moſt, or perhaps in all caſes, to connect together either ſentences, or words that comprehend the meaning of ſentences.

Sentences may be united, even when their *meanings* are disjoined, or oppoſed to one another. When I ſay, "Peter and John "went *becauſe* they were called," I join three ſentences in one; and the two laſt are, as it were, the continuation of the firſt: Peter went—John went—they went becauſe they were called. But if it be ſaid, "Peter and "John went, *but* Thomas would not go," though there are three ſentences joined in one, as before, the import of the laſt is, by means of the particle *but*, ſet in a ſort of oppoſition to the two firſt. Hence Con-

junctions have been divided into two kinds, *Conjunctive*, which join ſentences, and alſo connect their meanings; and *Disjunctive*, which, while they connect ſentences, disjoin their meanings, or ſet them, as it were, in oppoſition.

Theſe two claſſes have been ſubdivided by Grammarians into ſeveral ſubordinate ſpecies. It would be tedious to enumerate all the arrangements that have been propoſed. I ſhall juſt give the heads of Mr. Harris's ſubdiviſion; which will convey an idea of the various uſes to which the Conjunction may be applied.

" 1. The Conjunctions, that unite both " ſentences and their meanings, are either " *Copulative* or *Continuative*. The Copula- " tive may join all ſentences, however in- " congruous in ſignification: as, Alexander " was a conqueror, *and* the loadſtone is " uſeful. The Continuative joins thoſe ſen- " tences only which have a natural connec- " tion; as, Alexander was a conqueror *be-* " *cauſe* he was valiant.

" Continuatives are of two ſorts, *Suppo-* " *ſitive*, and *Poſitive*. The former denote " connection, but not actual exiſtence; as, " You will be happy *if* you be good. The " latter imply connection, and actual exiſt- " ence too; as, You are happy *becauſe* you " are good.

" More-

" Moreover Positive Continuatives are " either *Causal* or *Collective*. Those subjoin " causes to effects; as, He is unhappy *be-* " *cause* he is wicked: these subjoin effects to " causes; as, He is wicked, *therefore* un- " happy. *

" 2. Disjunctive Conjunctions, which " unite sentences while they disjoin their " meaning, are either *Simple*, which merely " disjoin; as, It is *either* John *or* James: " or *Adversative*, which both disjoin, and " mark an opposition; as, It is not John, " *but* it is James.

" Adversative Disjunctives are divided into " *Absolute* and *Comparative*: Absolute, as " when I say, Socrates was wise, *but* Alex- " ander was not; Comparative, as in this " example, Socrates was wiser *than* Alex- " ander.

" Adversative Disjunctives are further di- " vided into *Adequate* and *Inadequate*: Ade-

* *Therefore* was formerly mentioned as an adverb. And an adverb it is, when, without joining sentences, it only gives the sense of *for that reason*. When it both gives that sense, and also connects, as when we say, " He " is good; therefore he is happy," it is a conjunction. The same thing is true of *consequently*, *accordingly*, and the like. When these are subjoined to *and*, or joined to *if*, *since*, &c. they are adverbs, the connection being made without their help; when they appear single, and unsupported by any other connective, they may be called conjunctions.

" quate, as when it is ſaid, He will come *un-*
" *leſs* he be ſick, that is, his ſickneſs only
" will be an adequate cauſe to prevent his
" coming; Inadequate, as if it were ſaid,
" He will come *although* he be ſick, that is,
" his ſickneſs will not be a ſufficient or ade-
" quate cauſe to prevent his coming."

That all the Conjunctions neceſſary in language may be referred to one or other of theſe heads, I will not affirm. Perhaps it is impoſſible to determine, how many may be *neceſſary*. This we know, that barbarous nations have but few; that cultivated tongues, like the Greek and Latin, have a conſiderable number, (the Latin upwards of eighty); but that of this number ſome, being ſynonimous with others, and introduced for the ſake of variety, cannot be neceſſary; though they are uſeful, becauſe they may be ornamental.

Yet from this laſt circumſtance it muſt not be inferred, that there is a redundancy of connectives in theſe languages. We ſhall be inclined to think there is rather a deficiency, when we conſider, that one and the ſame conjunction has often ſeveral different ſignifications. Thus, the Latin *autem* denotes, *but*, *nay*, *beſides*, *indeed*, *on the contrary*; and has other niceties of meaning, to which perhaps there are no correſpondent particles in the Engliſh tongue. The true

import

import of ſuch connectives, as well as of other ambiguous words, can be aſcertained only by the context. And it is a great fault, in teaching the Claſſicks, when children are not inured to give to the conjunctions, which come in their way, that preciſe meaning, which an intelligent maſter will perceive that the context fixes upon them. For, if the ſcholar is permitted invariably to render *autem* (for example) by the Engliſh *but*, he muſt often loſe the ſenſe of his author; and, inſtead of being led by the connective to trace out the dependence of ſentences, he will be more at a loſs, than if that particle had been omitted.

Plutarch, in his Platonick queſtions, in order to account for that ſaying of Plato, that language is made up of nouns and verbs, has taken more pains than was neceſſary, to ſhow, that the noun and the verb are of all parts of ſpeech the moſt important. His reaſoning, however, is rather too much in the way of allegory, to convey clear ideas and full conviction. True it is, as he ſays, that nouns and verbs may form ſentences, independently on prepoſitions, articles, conjunctions, and adverbs; whereas theſe laſt cannot form ſentences, nor have any diſtinct meaning, without nouns and verbs. It is alſo true, that, (as he proves by a quotation from Demoſthenes), by leaving out conjunctions, one may ſometimes join the more

ſignificant words in cloſer union, and ſo give energy to particular paſſages: and that, from the want of articles, the Latin tongue is not the leſs perſpicuous; nor Homer's Greek the leſs elegant, for the omiſſion of them. Yet if, in the uſe of ſpeech, we were to confine ourſelves to nouns and attributives; and never have recourſe to prepoſitions, to mark relations of place, nor to conjunctions, to aſcertain the dependence of one part of our diſcourſe upon another, I apprehend, that we ſhould be much at a loſs, even on common emergencies; and that, in matters of inveſtigation and ſcience, we muſt be abſolutely incapable of accurate expreſſion.

There are two ways of thinking, and, conſequently, of ſpeaking, and writing. We ſometimes think miſcellaneouſly, (as one may ſay) when the preſent thought has little connection with what goes before, or follows. At other times, our ideas proceed in a train; and the preſent is naturally introduced by the foregoing, and naturally introduces the ſubſequent. This laſt is no doubt the moſt rational, as it is the moſt methodical, way of thinking; for in this way, many different ideas acquire one tendency, and are all employed for the ſupport and illuſtration of ſome one point, and of one another. In the one caſe, our thoughts reſemble a multitude, in which are many individuals,

but

but thoſe are unconnected; and, therefore, though there be great number, there is not proportionable ſtrength. In the other, our thoughts may be compared to an army in order of battle, where the ſtrength is in proportion to the number; becauſe the individuals are mutually dependent on, and ſupported by, one another; ſo that the force of each may add to that of all the reſt, and all the reſt may be ſaid to ſecond the efforts of each individual.

Now Conjunctions are thoſe parts of language, that, by joining ſentences in various ways, mark the connections, and various dependencies, of human thought. And therefore, if our thoughts be really connected and mutually dependent, it is moſt likely (as every man in ſpeaking and writing wiſhes to do juſtice to his ideas) that conjunctions will be employed, to make that connection, and thoſe dependencies obvious to ourſelves, and to others. And where there is, in any diſcourſe, a remarkable deficiency of connecting particles, it may be preſumed, either that there is a want of connection, or that ſufficient pains has not been taken to explain it.

The ſtyle of the beſt authors of Greece and Rome abounds in conjunctions and other connecting words. Take any page in Cicero, eſpecially where he ſpeaks in his own perſon, and in the way of inveſtigation, as

in his books of Moral Duties; and you ſhall hardly ſee a ſentence, that has not in, or near, the beginning, an *autem*, or *enim*, *ſed*, or *igitur*, or ſome other connective: by which we may inſtantly diſcover the relation, which the preſent ſentence bears to what went before; as an inference, an objection, an illuſtration, a continuation, a conceſſion, a condition, or ſimply as one ſentiment ſubjoined to another by a copulative. The ſtyle of Seneca, on the other hand, and that of Tacitus, are in this reſpect deficient. Their ſentences are ſhort, and their connectives few; ſo that the mutual dependence of their thoughts is rather left to the conjecture of the reader, than expreſſed by the author. And hence, we are told, it was, that the emperor Caligula remarked, (though we can hardly ſuppoſe Caligula to have been capable of ſaying ſo good a thing) that the ſtyle of Seneca was *Arenam ſine calce*, Sand without lime; meaning, that matter, or ſenſe, was not wanting, but that there was nothing to cement that matter into one uniform and ſolid maſs.

This uncemented compoſition has of late become faſhionable among the French and their imitators. One of the firſt who introduced it was Monteſquieu, an author of great learning and extraordinary penetration; who, as he reſembled Tacitus in genius, ſeems to have admired his manner, and copied his

his ſtyle. Like him, and like Florus, of whom alſo he was an admirer (as appears from his *Eſſay on Taſte*) he affects ſhort ſentences, in the way of aphoriſm; full of meaning, indeed, but ſo conciſe in the expreſſion as to be frequently ambiguous; and ſo far from having a regular connection, that their place might often be changed without inconvenience. This in philoſophical writing has a diſagreeable effect, both upon the memory, and upon the underſtanding of the reader.

Firſt, upon his memory. Nothing tends more to impreſs the mind with a diſtinct idea of a complex object, than a ſtrict and natural connection of the parts. And therefore, when a diſcourſe is not well connected, the ſentiments, however juſt, are eaſily forgotten; or, if a few be remembered, yet their general ſcope and tendency, having never been clearly apprehended, is not remembered at all.

And, ſecondly, upon his underſtanding. To read a number of detached thoughts, although it may amuſe the fancy, does not ſufficiently exerciſe the rational faculties. Of ſuch thoughts, that only which is preſent is attended to; and, if we underſtand it, we do all that is required of us. But, when we peruſe a regular inveſtigation, wherein many ſentiments are employed to illuſtrate or evince one leading point of doctrine, we

must attend, both to the present thought and to that which went before, that we may perceive the connection; we must also compare the several ideas together, in order to discern their agreement or disagreement, as well as the influence of all the premises in establishing the conclusion. This is a most wholesome intellectual exercise. It puts all our rational powers in motion, and inures us to a methodical way of thinking and speaking: and so quickens attention, strengthens memory, and gives direction and vigour to our inventive powers.

As the fashionable mode of unconnected composition is less improving to the mind of the reader, so it promotes a habit of inaccuracy and negligence in a writer. One of the greatest difficulties in writing is, to give a right arrangement to the several thoughts and parts, whereof a discourse is made up: and that arrangement is the best, in which the several parts throw most light upon one another. But when an author thinks himself at liberty to write without connection, he is at little pains to arrange his ideas, but sets them down just as they occur; sometimes taking up a subject in the middle, and sometimes at the end; and often quitting one point before he has discussed it, and recurring to it again when he ought to be engaged in something else. In a word, he is apt to be more intent upon the brilliancy

of

of particular thoughts, than upon their coherence: which is not more wife in an author, than it would be in an architect to build a houſe rather of round, ſmooth, and ſhining pebbles, than of ſtones of more homely appearance hewn into ſuch figures as would make them eaſily and firmly incorporate; or, than it would be in any man, rather to thatch his body with gaudy feathers, or ſplendid rags, than to cover it with one uniform piece of cloth, ſo ſhaped and united, as to defend him from the cold, without incumbrance.

Conjunctions, however, are not the only words that connect ſentences. Relative pronouns, as I formerly obſerved *, do the ſame; for a relative implies the force both of a pronoun and of a connective. Nay, the union by relatives is rather cloſer, than that by mere conjunctions. The latter may join two or more ſentences in one; but, by the former, ſeveral ſentences may incorporate in one and the ſame clauſe of a ſentence. Thus, You ſee a man *and* he is called Peter, is a ſentence conſiſting of *two* diſtinct clauſes united by the copulative *and*: but, The man *whom* you ſee is called Peter, is a ſentence of *one* clauſe, and not leſs comprehenſive than the other. Yet relatives are not ſo uſeful in language, as conjunctions. The former make ſpeech more conciſe; the

* Part II. Chap. i. Sect. 2.

latter make it more explicit. Relatives comprehend the meaning of a pronoun and conjunction *copulative*: conjunctions, while they *couple* ſentences, may alſo expreſs oppoſition, inference, and many other relations and dependencies.

Till men began to think in a train, and to carry their reaſonings to a conſiderable length, it is not probable, that they would make much uſe of conjunctions, or of any other connectives. Ignorant people and children generally ſpeak in ſhort and ſeparate ſentences. The ſame thing is true of barbarous nations: and hence uncultivated languages are not well ſupplied with connecting particles. The Greeks were the greateſt reaſoners that ever appeared in the world; and their language, accordingly, abounds more than any other in connectives: of which, though we cannot now account for them all, we may be aſſured that few or none were ſuperfluous.

Conjunctions are not equally neceſſary in all ſorts of writing. In poetry, where great conciſeneſs of phraſe is required, and every appearance of formality avoided, too many of them would have a bad effect. In paſſionate language too, it may be proper to omit them: becauſe it is the nature of violent paſſion to ſpeak rather in disjointed ſentences, than in the way of inference and argument.—Books of aphoriſm, like the Proverbs

verbs of Solomon, have few connectives; becauſe they inſtruct, not by reaſoning, but in detached obſervations. And narrative will ſometimes appear very graceful, when the circumſtances are plainly told, with ſcarce any other conjunction than the ſimple copulative *and*: which is frequently the caſe in the hiſtorical parts of Scripture.—When narration is full of images or events, the omiſſion of connectives may, by crouding the principal words upon one another, give a ſort of picture of hurry and tumult, and ſo heighten the vivacity of deſcription; as in that line of Lucretius,

Vulneribus, clamore, fuga, terrore, tumultu.

But when facts are to be traced down through their conſequences, or upwards to their cauſes; when the complicated deſigns of mankind are to be laid open, or conjectures offered concerning them; when the hiſtorian argues either for the elucidation of truth, or in order to ſtate the pleas and principles of contending parties; there will be occaſion for every ſpecies of connective, as much as in philoſophy itſelf. In fact, it is in argument, inveſtigation, and ſcience, where this part of ſpeech is peculiarly and indiſpenſably neceſſary.

Sometimes, the repetition of a connective, even where it is not neceſſary, adds weight to a remonſtrance, by calling the reader's atten-

attention to each individual clauſe: as, "*If* "there be any virtue, and *if* there be any "praiſe, &c. Will you ſacrifice liberty, "*and* truth, *and* honour, *and* conſcience, "*and* preſent convenience, *and* future re- "nown, *and* eternal felicity, *and* all to gra- "tify a tyrant?"

Grammarians have diſtinguiſhed the conjunction into Prepoſitive, Subjunctive, and Common. The firſt is always the firſt word of a clauſe or ſentence; as *et*, *aut*, *nec*, &c. in Latin; *and*, *unleſs*, *but*, &c. in Engliſh. The ſecond is never the firſt word of a ſentence or clauſe; as *too* in Engliſh, and *autem* in Latin. And the third may be either the firſt, or not the firſt, as the writer or ſpeaker pleaſes; as, in Engliſh, *however*, *conſequently*, *therefore*, &c; and, in Latin, *namque*, *ergo*, *igitur*, &c. This matter is to be determined, not by the ſenſe of the words, or the nature of the thing, but merely by the faſhion of the language.

There are conjunctions, that have an influence on the mood of the following verb; ſome governing the Indicative, and ſome the Subjunctive. If this were to depend on the meaning of the connective, and the nature of the mood, we might eſtabliſh it as a rule, that all Conditional, Hypothetical, Conceſſive, and Exceptive conjunctions ſhould take the Subjunctive mood, on account of their dependent character, which implies ſome-

thing

thing doubtful or contingent: and that, therefore, we ought to ſay, "*If* he *come* he "will be welcome,"—not, "If he comes;" "*Though* thou *ſlay* me, yet will I truſt in "thee," — not, "Though thou ſlayeſt;" "*Except* a man *be* born again," (—not, "is born") he cannot ſee the kingdom of "God;" "*Whether* he *come* as a friend or "as a foe, I will uſe him honourably;"—not, "Whether he comes." Other conjunctions of a more poſitive, abſolute, and independent ſignification, ought for the ſame reaſon to govern the Indicative: as "The "room is dark *becauſe* the day *is* cloudy: "*Since* he *repents*, I forgive him: *As* he *is* "a worthy man, he may be aſſured of my "friendſhip."—But this rule is not without exception. It deſerves, however, to be remembered; as it is generally attended to by Latin authors; and as in Engliſh we can ſeldom or never go wrong, if we follow it. *

* See above, page 256.

SECT. II.

Of the ARTICLE.

THE words, that become ſignificant by being joined to other words, I divided, in the beginning of this chapter, into two claſſes, the *Neceſſary*, and the *Uſeful*. The former, called Connectives, being now conſidered, it only remains, that I explain the latter, which are known by the name of *Articles*.

The word *article*, *articulus*, * *arthron*, properly ſignifies *a joint*. It would ſeem, that the firſt Grammarians thought there was ſomething of a joining power in the words of this order. But, if they thought ſo, they were miſtaken. The article is no connective. It is a Definitive: being uſed for the purpoſe of defining, aſcertaining, or limiting, the ſignification of thoſe words to which it is prefixed. Perhaps, however, they may have given it this name, with a view to ſome metaphorical alluſion.

In order to diſcover its uſe, we muſt recollect, that all nouns, proper names excepted, are general terms, or common appel-

* ἄρθρον.

latives.

latives. The word *mountain* is equally applicable to all mountains, and the word *man* to all men. Every veſſel of a certain ſize and form, which is made for ſailing, may be called *ſhip*: and the terms *valour*, *bounty*, *wiſdom*, belong to every perſon, who is valiant, bountiful, wiſe.

But, though it is true, of the *names* of things, that they are of *general* meaning, things themſelves are all *individuals*. No one man is either leſs or more than one; and every man has peculiarities, whereby he may be diſtinguiſhed from all others.

How, then, are we to reconcile the univerſality of names with the individuality of things? In other words: when we make uſe of a common appellative, as *man*, *houſe*, *mountain*, what method do we take to intimate, that we ſpeak of one, and not of many; of an individual, and not of a ſpecies? There are ſeveral ways of doing this: and, particularly, it may be done by Articles, or Definitives.

For example: I ſee an animated being, which has no proper name, or of whoſe proper name I am ignorant. In ſpeaking of it, therefore, I muſt refer it to its ſpecies, and call it *man*, *dog*, *horſe*, or the like; or, if I know not the ſpecies, I refer it to its genus, and call it *animal*. But this animated being is itſelf neither a genus, nor a

ſpecies;

ſpecies; it is an individual: and therefore, in ſpeaking of it, ſo as to mark its individuality, I call it *a horſe*, *a man*, *a dog*, *an animal:* which intimates, that I ſpeak of one, and not of many; of an individual being, and not of a claſs of beings. This article, therefore, *A* or *An*, has the ſame ſignification nearly with the numerical word *one*. And accordingly, in French and Italian, the ſame word that denotes unity is alſo the article of which I now ſpeak. Nay, in ſome of the dialects of old Engliſh, this ſeems to have been the caſe; for *an* is the ſame with *one* in the Saxon; and the vulgar in Scotland ſtill uſe *a* (pronouncing it, as in the word *name*) in the ſenſe of *one*; as *a day*, one day, "*a morning* I was early out," for, one morning.—Now obſerve, that, when it is ſaid, I ſee a man, I ſee an animal, the *a* or *an*, though it aſcertains the individuality, gives no further intimation concerning the thing ſpoken of. It is therefore called the *Indefinite article.*

Again: I ſee a certain animal, which I never ſaw before, or of which, though I may know to what ſpecies it belongs, I have no previous acquaintance; and I ſay, I ſee *an* elephant, *a* dwarf, *a* bear, &c. Next day, the ſame animal comes again in view; and I ſay, recognizing it as the ſame, There is *the* elephant, *the* dwarf, *the* bear: changing the former indefinite article into another,

which not only intimates individuality, but alſo implies previous acquaintance. This, from its power of aſcertaining ſome one individual, in preference to others of the ſame ſpecies, is called the *Definite article*: and it will appear in the ſequel to be much more *uſeful* than the other.

We have, therefore, in Engliſh, two articles or definitives, *A* or *An* and *The*: the former applicable to *any one* of a kind or ſort; the other uſed for the purpoſe of diſtinguiſhing *ſome particular one*. In French and Italian there are two correſpondent articles.

In Greek, there is no indefinite article; the noun without an article having the ſame meaning with our indefinite article prefixed to a noun; as * *anêr*, a man: but there is a definite article † *ho*, *hê*, *to*, which is for the moſt part of the ſame import with our Engliſh *the*; as ‡ *ho anêr*, the man.

In the Hebrew, as in Greek, there is no indefinite article; but there is a definite article, which they prefix to the noun ſo as to make one word with it; and which, like the Engliſh article, has no diſtinction of gender or number.

In the Erſe or Gaelick tongue, they have alſo a definite, but no indefinite, article.

* ἀνηρ. † ὁ, ἡ, τὸ. ‡ ὁ ανηρ.

And

And the uſe of the article ſeems to have been pretty general in all the primitive tongues of the north of Europe, the Gothick, and Teutonick, as well as the Celtick; from which we may account for the prevalence of theſe little words in our modern tongues. For it is remarkable, that, though all the languages derived from the Latin have articles, yet the Latin itſelf has none. Whence then did they get theirs? I anſwer, from thoſe northern nations who overturned the empire of Rome, and who, though they in part adopted the language of the vanquiſhed Romans, did alſo introduce into it a great variety of their own words and idioms.

That which is very eminent is ſuppoſed to be generally known. Hence the definite article may convey an idea of eminence, as well as of previous acquaintance. *A king* is any king; but *the king* is that perſon whom we acknowlege for our ſovereign. So when we ſay ſimply, the kingdom, the nation, the government, we of Great Britain mean the Britiſh government, nation, kingdom, &c.

Sometimes we denote eminence by omitting the article: we ſay, a member of parliament; an act of parliament; rather than, of *the parliament*. In this caſe, the thing ſpoken of is ſo very eminent, that it needs no article to make it more ſo: and beſides, a parliament, in our ſenſe of the word, is

an

an inſtitution peculiar to Britiſh policy. The twelve French Parliaments are rather courts of juſtice than legiſlative aſſemblies. And, among the vulgar of North Britain, whoſe language abounds in French idioms, the ſame idea appears to be ſtill annexed to the term: for they ſpeak of appealing *to the Britiſh parliament* from a ſentence of the Court of Seſſion; though they know, that the appeal is made, not to the Parliament, (in the Engliſh ſenſe of the word) but to the Houſe of Lords.

In Greek too, as in Engliſh, the article is a mark of eminence: * *ho poiêtês*, the poet, is uſed for Homer, the greateſt of poets; and † *ho ſtageiritês*, the Stagyrite, for Ariſtotle, who was the moſt famous of all the natives of the city Stagyra.

That which is nearly connected with us, or which from its vicinity we have been long acquainted with, becomes eminent in our eyes, even though, in itſelf, and compared with other things of the ſame kind, it be of no particular importance. One who lives near a very little town ſpeaks of it by the name of *the town*. Every clergyman within his own pariſh is called *the miniſter* or *the parſon*; and if in a village there be only one merchant or one ſmith, his neighbours think they diſtinguiſh him ſufficiently, by calling

* ὁ ποιητης. † ὁ σαγειριτης.

him *the ſmith* or *the merchant*. A tree, a rock, a hill, a river, a meadow, may be ſpoken of in the ſame manner, with the ſame emphaſis. He is not returned from *the hill*: he is bathing in *the river*: I ſaw him on the top of *the rock*: Will you take a walk in *the meadow*? A branch is blown down from *the tree*. In theſe examples, the definite article is uſed; becauſe the thing ſpoken of, being in the neighbourhood, is well known, and a matter of ſome importance to the people who are acquainted with it.

That we may perceive, yet more clearly, the ſignificancy of the articles, let us put the one for the other, and mark the conſequence. When it is ſaid, that "the anceſtors of the "kings in England three hundred years be-"fore *the* Conqueror," the ſenſe is clear; as every body knows, that the perſon here ſpoken of by the name of *the conqueror* is William duke of Normandy, who ſubdued England about ſeven hundred years ago. But if we ſay, that "the anceſtors of the "Royal Family were kings in England three "hundred years before *a* conqueror," we ſpeak nonſenſe.—Again, when it is ſaid, that "health is *a* moſt deſirable thing," there is no man who will not acquieſce in the propoſition; which only means that health is *one* of thoſe things that are to be very much

much desired. But, take the other article, and say, "Health is *the* most desirable "thing," and you change it from true to false: for this would imply, that nothing is so desirable as health; which is very wide of the truth; virtue, and a good conscience, being of infinitely greater value.—Moreover, if, instead of "Man is born to trouble," we say "*A* man is born to trouble," there is no material change in the sense; only the former is more solemn, perhaps because it is more concise: and here, by the by, we may see, that the indefinite article is sometimes of no great use. But if we say, "*The* "man is born to trouble," the maxim is no longer general; some one particular man is hinted at; and they to whom we speak would naturally ask, What man?

The learned Bishop Lowth has shown, in his excellent English grammar, that, in some instances, our translation of the New Testament has misrepresented the sense of the original Greek, by not attending to the article *. "When the Spirit of truth is "come," says the translation, "he will "guide you into *all truth*:" a promise, or

* The very title of the fifth book of the New Testament is mistranslated. It should be ACTS *of the Apostles*, not THE ACTS; the original being πραξεις, and not αἱ πραξεις. The error may appear minute, but it ought to be corrected; as the subject of the book corresponds to the one title, but by no means to the other.

a prophecy, which was not fulfilled by the event; for, after the coming of the Spirit on the day of Pentecoſt, it is probable, that the Apoſtles remained ignorant of many truths; indeed, it is not poſſible, that they could know every thing. But in the Greek of this paſſage we have an article (omitted in the Tranſlation) which gives a very different ſenſe:—"he will guide you into "all *the* truth;" * that is, into all Evangelical (or Chriſtian) truth; a prediction, which the event did fully juſtify.—Take another inſtance. When a Roman Centurion perceived the miraculous circumſtances that accompanied the Crucifixion, our Bible informs us, that he ſaid, "Truly "this was *the Son* of God:" which would imply, what is not likely, that this centurion was acquainted with our Saviour's hiſtory and doctrines, and particularly knew, that he called himſelf the Son of God, in a peculiar and incommunicable ſenſe. But the Greek has not this article; and ſhould therefore have been rendered, "Truly this was "*a ſon* of God," † or an extraordinary perſon,

* Εις πασαν την αληθειαν.

† Or rather, *a ſon of a God*; or, which is the ſame thing here, *the ſon of a God*, as Dr. Campbell renders it, in the work which he is now preparing for the preſs. See above, Chap. II; concluſion of Sect. i. The expreſſion in Greek is θεϐ υἱος, without any article; ſo that both words are equally indefinite. The phraſe υἱος τϐ θεϐ, which occurs ſometimes, is properly *a ſon of God*. But the title

perſon, and ſuperior to a mere man: a remark, which even heathens, though ignorant of our Saviour's hiſtory, might reaſonably make, on ſeeing the prodigies of earthquake and darkneſs that accompanied his laſt ſuffering.

Sometimes, however, our two articles do not differ ſo widely in ſignification. Thus, we may ſay, "It is true as *the* proverb de-"clares;" or, "it is true as *a* proverb, or "as *a certain* proverb declares, that," &c: and the change of the article does not make any material change in the ſenſe. In like manner we ſay, "That heaven ſmiles at the perjury of lovers, is a pernicious maxim of "*the poet*;" where the two laſt words allude, not to Homer, or Virgil, or any other poet of the firſt rank, but to Ovid, who was of an inferiour order. And this ſentence would loſe nothing of its ſignification, if we were to ſubſtitute the other article, and ſay, "*A poet* has delivered a pernicious maxim, "when he affirms, that heaven ſmiles at "the perjury of lovers."—A ſimilar idiom may be found in Greek. Thus Ariſtotle: "Change is the ſweeteſt of all things, ac-"cording to *the poet* *;" where *the poet*

title which our Saviour takes to himſelf, and which is given him by his Apoſtles, is always in the Goſpel ὁ υἱος τȣ θεȣ, *the Son of the* (true) *God*.

* Μεταβολη δε παντων γλυκυτατον, κατα τον ποιητην. Ethic. ad Nicom. lib. 7.

ſignifies, not Homer, but Euripides; an author of great merit, but by no means equal to Homer, even in Ariſtotle's judgment. Now if the Greek article had been omitted, "Change is the ſweeteſt of all things, as "*a poet* ſays," it is plain, that the ſentence would have had the ſame meaning.

In ſome caſes, the definite article conveys a peculiar ſenſe. *A ſpeaker* is any man who ſpeaks; but *the Speaker* is the perſon who preſides in the Houſe of Commons. *An advocate*, in Scotland, is any one who is entitled to plead in the higher courts of juſtice; but *the advocate* is he, whoſe office correſponds to that which in England is held by the King's Attorney General. *A council* is any aſſembly of men met in conſultation; but *the council* is, according to the Engliſh idiom, the King's Privy Council. So, in Greek, * *anthrôpos* is *a man*, but *ho anthrôpos* is ſometimes (as in the Phædo of Plato) the publick executioner; † *ploion* is *a ſhip*, but *to ploion* is that particular ſhip, which the Athenians ſent every year, on a religious embaſſy, to Delos.

Words, that are ſufficiently definite in themſelves, ſtand in no need of the article to make them more ſo. Such are the pronouns, *I*, *thou*, *he*, *ſhe*, and *it*; to which, accordingly, the article is never prefixed,

* ἀνθρωπος, ὁ ανθρωπος. † πλοιον, το πλοιον.

either

either in Greek, or in Engliſh *. And ſuch, one would think, muſt thoſe proper names be, that diſtinguiſh one individual from all others. And it is true, that, in many languages, the proper names of men and women appear without any article. But in Greek it is not always ſo: Socrates is ſometimes called † *ho Sôkratês*; and his wife, *hê Xanthippê*. Moſt grammarians conſider this as a redundancy in the Greek; or, at beſt, as an expedient to mark the gender.

The Author of an Eſſay *On the origin and progreſs of language* affirms, that the Greeks prefixed the article to the proper names, either of perſons who were eminent; or of ſuch perſons, whether eminent or not, whoſe names had been formerly mentioned in the diſcourſe: and that, therefore, *ho Sôkratês* ſignifies, either *the famous Socrates*, or *the abovementioned Socrates*. This once appeared to me ſo plauſible, that I adopted it; confiding in the accuracy and erudition of the Author; both which I know to be very great. But ſome Greek paſſages occurring to my memory firſt made me doubtful:

* In paſſages, like the following from Shakſpeare,

> Lady you are *the* cruelleſt *ſhe* alive—
> *The* fair, *the* chaſte, *the* unexpreſſive *ſhe*—
> *The ſhees* of Italy will not betray—

the word *She* is not pronominal, but a noun of the ſame import with *woman*, or *lady*.

† ὁ σωκρατης, ἡ ξανθιππη.

and, on looking a little into books with this particular view, I was ſatisfied, that the learned writer is miſtaken. See the introductory paragraph of the Anabaſis of Xenophon; in which, without the article, Darius is named three ſeveral times, Paryſatis twice or thrice, and Artaxerxes as often. See alſo the beginning of Xenophon's Memorabilia; where Socrates himſelf is mentioned by name twelve times (if I miſtake not) without the article, before he is once mentioned with it. I am now, therefore, convinced, that thoſe Grammarians are in the right, who conſider the Greek article, when prefixed to proper names of men and women, as a pleonaſm, or as an expedient, in certain caſes, to clear the ſenſe, aſcertain the gender, or improve the harmony.

The Italians prefix the definite article to ſome of their moſt celebrated names; as *Il Dante*, *Il Petrarca*, *Il Taſſo*; and even to famous ſingers and fiddlers, as *La Fraſi*, *Il Seneſino*, *Il Tartini*: in which they have of late been imitated by ſome of the people of London, who, ſpeaking of favourite muſicians, ſay, *The* Mingotti, *the* Gabrielli, &c; but this is affectation, and ſuits not the idiom of the Engliſh tongue. — Another faſhion, not unlike this, has been lately introduced, which, though alſo contrary to idiom, will probably eſtabliſh itſelf in the language, as it is now generally adopted:

" I was

" I was laſt night in company with *a*
" Mr. Such-a-one, who told us ſome good
" ſtories." The indefinite article is here put for the word *one*; and the meaning is, that the perſon is not known, or very little known, to thoſe who ſpeak of him in this manner.

To the proper names of ſome great natural objects, as mountains and rivers, we prefix the definite article in Engliſh, as they alſo do in French; and ſay, the Alps, the Grampians, the Andes, the Thames, the Tiber, the Dee: but to ſingle mountains however large we do not prefix it; we ſay, Etna, Atlas, Lebanon, Olympus, Morven, not the Etna, the Atlas, &c. — In France, they diſtinguiſh the names of certain countries by the definite article; as *la France*, *l'Angleterre*, *l'Eſpagne*; but this is not done in Engliſh. Indeed our way of applying the article differs in many reſpects from theirs: but I cannot enter into particulars, without quitting the tract of Univerſal Grammar.

When a proper name belongs to ſeveral perſons, it may become a ſort of common appellative, and take the article; as the Ceſars, the Gordons, the Howards. And the article may alſo be applied to diſtinguiſh one perſon from another of the ſame name; as
" *The* Pliny, who wrote the Natural Hiſ-
" tory, is not *the* Pliny who compoſed the
" pane-

" panegyrick on Trajan." In this uſe, the definite article coincides nearly in ſenſe with the pronominal article *that*. And this ſame pronoun *that* we ſometimes uſe for the definite article.

Thus I preſume it is uſed in a very ſolemn paſſage of Scripture; where Jehovah, appearing in the burning buſh to Moſes, declares his name in theſe words, " I am *that* I AM;" that is, " I am *the* I AM;" or " I am *the* " *great* I AM:" I am he, who alone poſſeſſes perfect and independent exiſtence. This example I the rather take notice of, becauſe a learned author inſinuates, that there is no ſenſe in it, as it ſtands in the Engliſh Bible; and contends, that it ſhould have been rendered, as in the Greek of the Septuagint, " I am the being," or rather, " I am he " who is." * But it ſeems to me, that in our verſion the paſſage is not leſs ſignificant. Indeed, if we pronounce it, as is commonly done, " I *am* that I *am*," laying the emphaſis on the two verbs, and without any emphaſis on the pronominal article *that*, it will not appear to have any grammatical propriety. But let an emphaſis be laid on *that*, which is here a moſt emphatical word; and another emphaſis on the concluding words I AM, which are ſtill more emphatical, becauſe they are the name by which the Deity is here

* Εγω ειμι ὁ ὢν.

pleaſed

pleaſed to make himſelf known; and the paſſage will be found to be both intelligible and ſublime.—The ſame emphatical uſe of the pronoun *that* occurs in other parts of the Engliſh Bible. "Art thou *that* my Lord "Elijah?" ſays Ahab's meſſenger to the Prophet: that is, Art thou the *great* or the *celebrated* Lord Elijah? "This is *that* king "Ahaz," ſays the hiſtorian, after ſpecifying ſome of his wicked actions: This is the king Ahaz ſo *notorious* for his impiety.*

Articles being ſo important, it may be doubted whether I expreſs myſelf properly, when I affirm, that they are uſeful in language, but not neceſſary; and whether the Latin tongue, which is ſuppoſed to have no article, muſt not, on that account, be very deficient in both perſpicuity and energy. This matter deſerves to be conſidered.

It is true, that many learned men have thought, that the want of an article is a great deficiency in the Latin tongue: and ſome modern authors have gone ſo far as to ſay, that this alone makes it improper for philoſophy. Yet Quintilian, who underſtood Greek and Latin better, as I ſuppoſe, than any modern can pretend to do, and who alſo appears to have been a proficient in philoſophy, declares, that the Latin tongue has no need of articles; and Scaliger, one

* 1 Kings xviii. 7. 2 Chron. xxviii. 22.

of the moſt learned men and ableſt grammarians of latter times, is of the ſame opinion: for that, by means of *ipſe* and *ille*, and ſome other pronouns, every thing of real importance, which the Greek article can expreſs, may be ſignified in Latin. And I think they are right. If, for example, I am deſired to tranſlate thoſe words of Scripture, in which the article is indeed moſt emphatical, "And Nathan ſaid unto David, Thou "art *the* man:" what is eaſier than to ſay, *Et dixit Nathan Davidi, Tu es ille homo*; or, more ſimply, *Tu es ille*; or, more ſimply ſtill, for the context would bear it, *Tu es?* —"I am *that* I AM," may be rendered as emphatically in Latin, as in Engliſh or Greek, Ego ſum *ille* EGO SUM; or, Ego ſum ille cui nomen EGO SUM.

The firſt verſe of St. John's Goſpel, in which the articles are very ſignificant, and which we tranſlate exactly and literally from the Greek, "In the beginning was *the* "Word, and *the* Word was with God, and "*the* Word was God," *may* no doubt be rendered ambiguouſly in Latin thus, *In principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Verbum erat Deus* *. For this *might* be ſo turned into Engliſh, as to produce nonſenſe and blaſphemy. But that would be the fault, not of the language, but of the

* Caſtalio's tranſlation of this verſe is not much better.

tranſ-

tranſlator. For one, who underſtands Greek and Latin, and is attentive to the meaning, and anxious to preſerve it, would render the verſe, as in the Port Royal Greek Grammar it is rendered, In principio erat Verbum *illud*, et Verbum *illud* erat apud Deum, et *illud* Verbum erat Deus:—which is as expreſſive, as either the Engliſh, or the Greek. If it be ſaid, that this Latin is not elegant, on account of the repetition of the pronoun; I anſwer, firſt, that elegance is not to be expected in a tranſlation ſo exactly literal; and, ſecondly, that in a ſentiment of ſuch importance, and which human wiſdom could never have diſcovered, accuracy of expreſſion is more requiſite, than Claſſical purity. Had St. John written in Latin, he would have delivered this doctrine with equal energy, and probably with more elegance: which every perſon, who is acquainted with that language, knows might eaſily be done, if one is not limited to any particular phraſeology.

When words are *materially* taken; that is, when they appear in a diſcourſe as words only, and not as ſignificant of any idea; as when we ſay, "The word *Boiſterous* has a "harſh ſound;"—the article is uſeful in Greek, to indicate their nature. And I obſerve, that verbal criticks often introduce the Greek article in their Latin annotations, in order to point out ſuch words when

they

they occur: as, "Deeſt TÒ *eſt* in manu-
"ſcriptis quibuſdam, THE *eſt* is wanting
"in ſome manuſcripts." But this is an affectation, for which there is not the leaſt neceſſity. "In Manuſcriptis quibuſdam "deeſt ILLUD *eſt*," is good Latin, and perfectly intelligible.

I deny not, that, in ſuch Greek books as the Analyticks and Metaphyſicks of Ariſtotle, there may be points of doctrine, which the Roman language, from its want of an article, cannot expreſs, without either adopting ſome of the Greek terms, or giving a licence to barbarous latinity. But this is no material grievance. Many things are delivered in thoſe books, as maxims of univerſal ſcience, which are only grammatical obſervations on particular Greek words; and which, therefore, cannot be tranſplanted into a foreign tongue, unleſs thoſe Greek words are tranſplanted along with them: even as, in an Engliſh grammar of the Latin language, you cannot ſpeak ſo as to be underſtood, unleſs you illuſtrate what you ſay by Latin examples.—Beſides, when we borrow arts or ſciences from another nation, we muſt always borrow ſomething of their native phraſeology. Thus, in fortification, we uſe many French, in muſick many Italian, and in rhetorick and medicine many Greek, words. And thus, if we were to write the Hiſtory of England in Latin, we ſhould be obliged

obliged to coin many words that were never known in antient Rome; in order to expreſs thoſe peculiarities of Government and manners, of which the Romans could not ſpeak, becauſe they had no idea; as parliament, chancery, peers, commons, guns, bayonets, cannon, &c.—In fact, Ariſtotle's metaphyſical writings ſeem never to have been in any repute among the Romans of the Claſſick ages. That intelligent people adopted what was valuable in the Greek philoſophy: but thoſe verbal ſubtleties and ſpeculations, that had nothing to do with buſineſs, or the conduct of life, they neglected; and I think with good reaſon.

That articles are not of neceſſary uſe, even in Greek, may appear from this, that the Grecian poets, eſpecially Homer, frequently omit them: though I know not, whether there be extant an author more perſpicuous than Homer, notwithſtanding his great antiquity. To which I may add, that, in the Attick dialect, articles are either uſed or omitted, according as they are thought to be more or leſs ornamental in diſcourſe. — In Engliſh, the definite article may often be dropped, without any ambiguity; as, "Horſe and man fell to the "ground," for *the* horſe, and *the* man. This omiſſion is common in our burleſque poems; as, "And pulpit, drum eccleſi-"aſtick, Was beat with fiſt inſtead of a "ſtick:"

" ſtick:" that is, *the* pulpit was beat with *the* fiſt. And of ſo little account is our indefinite article, that it is never prefixed to nouns of the plural number: we ſay, " *A* man is coming," if there be but one; but, if more than one, we ſay, " *Men* are " coming." The French, indeed, give a plural to their indefinite article; *un homme*, a man, *des hommes*, men, or ſome men: but this plural cannot in that, or in any, language be neceſſary, when in our own we hardly perceive that it is wanting.

Yet, that there are in Latin no ambiguities ariſing from the want of an article, I will not affirm. In the beginning of the Eneid, Juno, calling to mind thoſe manifold grievances, which made her reſolve upon the deſtruction of the Trojan fleet, exclaims,

Pallaſne exurere claſſem
Argivum, atque ipſos potuit ſubmergere ponto!

Theſe words may bear two interpretations: Could Pallas burn *the* Grecian fleet! or, Could Pallas burn *a* Grecian fleet! The laſt is the true one; for the whole Grecian fleet was not burned by Pallas, but that ſquadron only, which belonged to Ajax the ſon of Oileus. Now here is an ambiguity, which Virgil might eaſily have avoided, if he had written in a language that either

either had an indefinite article, like the Engliſh, or, like the Greek, could have conveyed an indefinite ſenſe by omitting the article. But of ſo little importance is this ambiguity, that I doubt whether the poet would have thought it worth his while to guard againſt it; as no perſon, who knows any thing of the poetical hiſtory, could be at a loſs to diſcover the meaning. Many things occur both in ſpeech and in writing, which they only can underſtand, who attend to what goes before, and to what comes after. And if we be not in ſome meaſure prepared for the ſtudy of an author, by a little previous acquaintance with his ſubject, we muſt in the cleareſt language find obſcurity, eſpecially in the beginning of a work. As to the obſcurity in queſtion, it is certain, that, without the help of any article, and by the native powers of the Latin tongue, Virgil could have avoided it; as it is probable he would, if he had thought it a blemiſh.

I would not inſinuate, that the Latin is as comprehenſive a language as the Greek. Both Lucretius and Cicero complain, that on the ſubject of philoſophy it is deficient. But this, I preſume, is not owing to the want of an article; nor do they ſay, that it is: but to ſome other circumſtances; whereof I need only mention this one; that the Latin tongue was completely formed and

poliſhed, before any attempt was made to write philoſophy in it. So that, when Cicero introduced the Greek learning, he was obliged to coin ſeveral words, which, notwithſtanding his authority, never became current; and often to expreſs the Greek idea by a Greek word, becauſe he could not find a Latin one of the ſame ſignification.

But, whatever we determine in regard to the preſent queſtion, this at leaſt muſt be granted; that if, from its want of articles, the Latin tongue be leſs ſimple, and ſometimes leſs perſpicuous, than the Greek or Engliſh, it is in general more conciſe than either. By the abſence of theſe little words, the more important parts of the expreſſion are permitted to have a cloſer coherence. And therefore, though the Latin may be leſs adapted to the abſtruſer philoſophy, it is, however, as ſuſceptible, as even the Greek itſelf, of all the charms of poetical, hiſtorical, and oratorical compoſition.

The great excellence of the Greek is ſimplicity; and that power, which it poſſeſſes unrivalled, of adapting itſelf ſo eaſily to every ſubject, and every ſcience. In Homer and Iſocrates, it may be thought more *harmonious*, than any other language: but I can hardly admit, that in this reſpect the Latin is inferiour, when modulated by Cicero and Virgil. Its dual number, optative mood,

middle verb, ſecond aoriſt, and ſecond future, from which ſome would fain perſuade themſelves that it derives part of its pre-eminence, I muſt, till I ſee them better explained than they have hitherto been, conſider as ſuperfluities: which make it more difficult, indeed, in the acquiſition, and ſomewhat more various in the ſound, but contribute nothing to its ſignificancy. Its preterperfect, aoriſt, and article, give it ſome advantage over the Latin; but the Engliſh, and other modern languages, have alſo an article, aoriſt, and preterperfect. In fact, Grammarians ſeem to me to ſpeak very abſurdly, when they call every tongue barbarous, except the Greek and Roman. The language of ſuch men as Milton, Addiſon, Boileau, Taſſo, and Metaſtaſio, cannot be barbarous. Elſe how comes it, that the greateſt maſters of Claſſick learning find it ſo difficult to do juſtice to thoſe authors by tranſlation. If Dobſon's *Paradiſus Amiſſus*, the exacteſt poetical verſion, perhaps, that ever was written *, does not deſerve to be called barbarous, I ſhould be glad to know, in what ſenſe of the word, or with what

* I once thought (ſee the Concluſion of an Eſſay *on the Uſefulneſs of Claſſical Learning*) that Homer was of all poets the moſt fortunate in a Tranſlator. I had not then ſeen Dobſon's incomparable performance: and the Engliſh *Eſchylus*, by my very learned, ingenious, and worthy Friend, the Rev. Mr. Potter, was not then publiſhed.

propriety, the original *Paradiſe Loſt* can be ſo called.—But Engliſh is not ſo elegant as Latin and Greek. Be it ſo. Yet, would it not be hard to call one a barbarian, merely becauſe one has not reached the ſummit of politeneſs? The leſs elegant a language is in its ſtructure, the more merit have they who write elegantly in it. If St. Paul's Cathedral were of Parian marble, inſtead of Portland ſtone, its appearance might be more ſplendid; but the ſublime imagination of Sir Chriſtopher Wren would not be more conſpicuous.

It was ſaid, that in Engliſh the indefinite article is not prefixed to nouns of the plural. It ſhould have been added, that when an Engliſh plural noun is a *Collective*, that is, when by referring many, or more than one, to a claſs, it beſtows unity upon them, it may then aſſume the indefinite article. Thus we ſay, not only *a dozen*, *a ſcore*, *a hundred*, but alſo *a few*, and *a great many*; *a many* is found in Shakſpeare. *An eight days* is old Engliſh; for it occurs in the Bible, and is ſtill a vulgar idiom in Scotland. It was once, no doubt, conſidered as a collective; like the word *fortnight* or *fourteen-night*. But this remark, like many others in the diſcourſe, belongs not to Univerſal Grammar.

And now, to conclude. It appears, that, to conſtitute a language as perfect as the Latin,

Latin, NINE ſorts of words, or parts of ſpeech, are neceſſary: the Noun, Pronoun, Adjective, Participle, Verb, Adverb, Interjection, Prepoſition, and Conjunction. The Latin Grammarians, indeed, enumerate only eight; becauſe they improperly refer Nouns and Adjectives to the ſame claſs. In Greek, Engliſh, Italian, French, Hebrew, and many other languages, there are TEN parts of ſpeech: the Noun, Pronoun, Adjective, Participle, Verb, Adverb, Interjection, Prepoſition, Conjunction, and Article.

According to Ariſtotle, the parts of ſpeech are four: the Article, Name, Verb, and Connective. This is not ſo inaccurate, as at firſt ſight it may ſeem to be: for we may ſuppoſe, that to the Name he refers both the Noun, and its repreſentative the Pronoun; to the Verb, (or Attributive), the Adjective, Participle, Verb (ſtrictly ſo called), and Adverb, and conſequently the Interjection; and, to the Connective, both the Conjunction and the Prepoſition. Yet I do not think this diviſion accurate. For there are many Adverbs, thoſe of time and place, for example, which cannot by any juſt reaſoning be proved to belong to the claſs of Attributives; and the ſame thing is true of the Interjections.

Plato reduces all the parts of ſpeech to two, the Noun and the Verb: which his followers endeavour to vindicate, by urging, that every word muſt denote, either a Subſtance,

ſtance, or the Attribute of a Subſtance; that by the Noun, and Pronoun, Subſtances are ſignified, as Attributes are by the Attributive; and that Attributives are ſpoken of, by the antient Grammarians, under the general denomination of Verb. But neither is this ſatisfactory. For there are many words in language, as articles and connectives, which in themſelves cannot be ſaid to ſignify either Subſtance or Attribute; becauſe, when taken ſeparately, they ſignify nothing at all.

If it be aſked, What ſorts of words are moſt, and what leaſt, neceſſary; the following anſwer may be collected from what has been evinced in the courſe of this long inveſtigation. The Noun, Pronoun, Verb, Participle, Adjective, Prepoſition, and Conjunction, ſeem to be eſſential to language: the Article, Interjection, and moſt of the Adverbs, are rather to be called uſeful, than neceſſary, Parts of Speech.

THE END.

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